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# CHRISTIAN ORIENT

A JOURNAL OF EASTERN CHURCHES FOR CREATIVE THEOLOGICAL THINKING

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## LITURGY

POST-COMMUNION PART OF THE SYRO-MALABAR QURBANA

Dr. Thomas Mannooramparampil

HINDU PERSPECTIVE OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP:

SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN LITURGICAL MUSIC IN INDIA

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BOOK REVIEW, NEWS



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## DIFFERENTIATING TRADITION FROM TRENDS

In the forward of Alcuin Reid's *The Organic Development of the Liturgy* (2004) Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) cautions against the undesirable trend of "anthropological turn" in liturgical reform. Apparently attractive and relevant it is its proponents call for a liturgical reform according to the tastes and trends of the peoples of a particular time and place, which in turn reduces the liturgy to a product of the community that celebrates it. What happens here is an over emphasis on the idea prevailed in the Latin Church, which Jungmann describes, a "liturgy that came to be," rather than the eastern concept of "Divine Liturgy," denoting a liturgy free human control. In the words of Ratzinger, what is missed in the anthropocentric liturgy is nothing but the core of liturgy, the actions of God:

Different again, and yet related to this, is the suggestion by some Catholic liturgists that we should finally adapt the liturgical reform to the 'anthropological turn' of modern times and construct it in an anthropocentric style. If the Liturgy appears first of all as the workshop for our activity, then what is essential is being forgotten: God. For the Liturgy is not about us, but about God. Forgetting about God is the most imminent danger of our age. As against this, the Liturgy should be setting up a sign of God's presence. Yet what happens if the habit of forgetting about God makes itself at home in the Liturgy itself and if in the Liturgy we are thinking only of ourselves? In any and every liturgical reform, and every liturgical celebration, the primacy of God should be kept in view first and foremost.

The primacy of individual creativity at the cost of God's action in the liturgy is the result of a misconceived perception on liturgical tradition. Most often it is heard from the liturgical revisionist circle that each generation should create its own liturgy according to the hopes and aspiration of the people of a particular time. Here traditions are considered merely lessons of the past. Many things of the past are good and informative; however they are not normative to the modern man. Although sounds relevant it may be in the historical or philosophical circles, this argument is inconsistent with genuine liturgical progress. Liturgical tradition is not something that belongs to the past alone, but it is the living memory of the present, which in turn is informed and formed by the past. Therefore, although originated in the past, "the Our Father" or the "Creed" and the classical anaphoras and prayer formulae have not simply the value of information to concoct new prayer forms; rather, they are decisive and credible points in shaping the faith and worship of the Christian community.

We pray in continuity with the faith of the apostles and fathers. Anchored in the apostolic time and places, the genuine liturgical tradition transmits and ensures this continuity and authenticity. Traditions are not dead fossils of the past; rather, they are like living organisms, growing, sometimes assuming new forms interacting to the needs of the time. Growth in an organism happens naturally based on the laws governing that body, and not artificially by force or violence. This is applicable to liturgical tradition also. Ratzinger enlightens us in the same forward of the above-mentioned book:



Between these two groups, the radical reformers and their radical opponents, the voices of those people who regard the Liturgy as something living, and thus as growing and renewing itself both in its reception and in its finished form, are often lost. These latter, however, on the basis of the same argument, insist that growth is not possible unless the Liturgy's identity is preserved, and they further emphasise that proper development is possible only if careful attention is paid to the inner structural logic of this "organism": Just as a gardener cares for a living plant as it develops, with due attention to the power of growth and life within the plant and the rules it obeys, so the Church ought to give reverent care to the Liturgy through the ages, distinguishing actions that are helpful and healing from those that are violent and destructive.

Therefore, utmost care is necessary in handling liturgical tradition that is shaped in a definite form, which is the rite. The laws governing in that living organism is to be respected fully. That is why the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "even the supreme authority in the Church may not change the liturgy arbitrarily, but only in the obedience of faith and with religious respect for the mystery of the liturgy" (CCC 1125).

However, most often there is a tendency among enthusiasts of liturgical reformers to equate tradition with prevailing trends of the times and tastes of the people, and succumb to them at the expense of genuine liturgical traditions. As far as the Syro-Malabar Liturgical tradition is concerned, the determined and decisive factor of its tradition is its East Syrian heritage. All genuine reforms of the SM liturgy are guaranteed only when the structural logic of this "organism" is appreciated and the power of growth and life within this tradition is respected. Equating this normative tradition to an inexistent mythical liturgy of the early centuries, or to the forms adopted in the forced Latinised period and to the experiments and trends in the field of

inculturation or liberation theology or renewal movements are detriment to the genuine reform and growth of tradition. What we need is the mind of a gardener rather than that of a technician as the learned Pope suggests:

That is why, with respect to the Liturgy, he has the task of a gardener, not that of a technician who builds new machines and throws the old ones on the junk-pile. The "rite", that form of celebration and prayer which has ripened in the faith and the life of the Church, is a condensed form of living Tradition in which the sphere using that rite expresses the whole of its faith and its prayer, and thus at the same time the fellowship of generations one with another becomes something we can experience, fellowship with the people who pray before us and after us. Thus the rite is something of benefit that is given to the Church, a living form of *paradosis*, the handing-on of Tradition.

Therefore, as the Pope suggests there need a fresh approach to the handling of tradition, devoid of the influence of the "unholy twins," i.e., "archaeological enthusiasm and pastoral pragmatism," differentiating authentic traditions from trends and tastes of the time, safeguarding its pre-eminence at the same time opening to genuine growth from within as in the case of an organism. Let not the ephemeral trends dictate liturgical restoration and reform, resulting to the danger which the Pope foresees in the same forward: "'pastoral' aspect becoming the point at which 'creativity' breaks in, destroying the unity of the Liturgy and very often confronting us with something deplorably banal."

Jose Kochuparampil



## **POST-COMMUNION PART OF THE SYRO-MALABAR QURBANA**

*Dr. Thomas Mannooramparampil*

The post-communion part of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana consists in the ordering, tesbota, and invitation of the deacon, thanksgiving of the celebrant, Our Father and the hutama.

### **1. Ordering**

After the Holy Communion the rest of the sacred hosts is taken to the southern bethgazza. The priest after consuming them washes the holy vessels and places them in their proper places. This rite is called ordering.

If a priest alone celebrates the Qurbana the ordering can be done after the Qurbana, although he does it during the tesbota.. Since in the Oriental Churches there are deacons to assist, they perform this rite during the thanksgiving prayers. Apostolic Constitutions exhorts deacons to take the rest of the consecrated hosts to the sacristy immediately after the Holy Communion. While other deacons and priests continue the Qurbana they consume them and perform the ablutions. When there are only one deacon and one priest, the deacon places the rest of the hosts in the sacristy or on the side credence and then continues the thanksgiving prayers. When it is over, he returns to perform the ablutions.

When the priest is alone, ablution can be done after the Qurbana. It is to show the great veneration of the Church towards the Eucharist and the holy altar, that the rest of the Eucharist is removed from the altar immediately after the Qurbana.<sup>[1]</sup>

### **In the Early Church**

There were neither special prayers for giving the Holy Communion nor any particular rite for ablution in the early Church. Certain Churches following the instruction of Levi 8:32 burnt the rest of the consecrated hosts. It was buried in Constantinople. Another custom was to give it to children to consume.

### **In the East Syrian Church**

Since the East Syrian canonists do not generally permit the preservation of the Eucharist, the general prescription is to perform the ordering immediately after the divine service. Since they take for granted the possibility that particles may remain after the communion service because the exact number of the particles need not correspond to the number of the communicants they deal with the different ways of consuming it. Although the East Syrian priest requires generally the help of the deacon for the ordering he is allowed

[1] Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London 1970) 140,419.



to perform it alone in the case of emergency when no deacon is available.<sup>[2]</sup>

There are two places for the rite of ablution in the history of the liturgy. The first is to perform it after the communion and before thanksgiving. The second is to remove the holy Eucharist, if there is any, and the vessels to the sacristy and to perform the ablution there after the divine service. While the second custom is generally followed in the Nestorian Church<sup>[3]</sup> the restored Qurbana has adopted the first custom of ablution immediately after the Holy Communion. Even if the ordering takes place immediately after the communion rite, the chalice and the paten should be removed from the altar since the East Syrian rite does not permit them to remain there after the communion service.

### On Bethgazza

It is on the bethgazza that the holy vessels are cleansed. Ishoyahb IV says that holy Eucharist is kept there.<sup>[4]</sup> Immediately after the Holy Communion holy vessels are to be removed from the altar. Taksas 1986 and 1989 prescribe that they are taken to the southern bethgazza. 1968 taksa asked to take them to the northern bethgazza. . Although, as a rule, deacon is necessary, in his absence the celebrant priest alone can perform it. It can be done immediately after communion service or after the Huntsman. 1989 Roman Document says: "If there is a deacon or concelebrating priest the purification of the vessels after communion should not be done by the

principal celebrant. This may be done after the Liturgy"(No.82)

### The Prayers

1968,1989 and 2005 English texts prescribe one of the three prayers for ablution need be said while 1986 text asks to recite all the three prayers.1989 Roman document say: "The three prayers at the purification may be printed as three options, only one of which need be said". (No.83).

There is no special prayer for ablution in the East Syrian taksa. The prayers speak about the Holy Communion without referring to ablution and are given after the Qurbana probably because in the East Syrian Church the Holy Communion of the celebrant and of the deacon and subsequently ablution of the vessels take place only after the hutama, in which people are dismissed. Diamper text does not give this rite and its prayers. Roman taksa, which introduced the three prayers for ablution in 1774, gives them separately after the Qurbana. It was incorporated into the text when the taksa was printed in Mannanam. They are addressed to Christ, Lord of all and hope of mankind.

The first prayer "Let not your living Body, O Lord, which we have eaten and the precious Blood which we have drunk, turn into our judgement and condemnation, nor into our weakness and infirmity, but may it obtain for us the pardon of debt and the forgiveness of sins and confidence in your sight ..." is said in 1986 taksa when the celebrant consumes

[2] Van Unnik Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist by Ishoyahb IV (Haarlem 1937) Q.18, p.164

[3] Id p.231 and 234;Br 304-305.

[4] Id. Question 16.



what is left over. It can be omitted if the rest is not consumed. The one who performs the ablution says the prayer. It summarizes 1 Cor. 11:27-32. It warns against the unworthy reception of the Eucharist, resulting in judgement and condemnation, weakness and infirmity and enumerates the positive fruits of the Holy Communion: pardon of debts, forgiveness of sins and confidence in Christ's sight.

After the consumption of the Eucharist, the celebrant goes to the bethgazza on the northern side and the deacon pours wine and water into the chalice. After consuming it, in the 1986 text the celebrant says: "In us who have taken your Body exteriorly, may your virtue interiorly and may we greet you with gladness and we shall give glory to you with the hymn 'thrice holy' in company of the just who fulfill your will, O Christ. ..." The priest drinks from the chalice after this prayer, which refers, to the Body and not to the Blood. It presents as the effect of holy communion the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the gladness with which to meet Christ on his second coming and the fortune to give glory to him with the hymn 'thrice holy' in company with the just who fulfill his will.

The third prayer is said when the celebrant wipes the chalice and paten: "Make us who have received your Body from the paten and drunk your Blood from the chalice, worthy to sing your praises with the thief in paradise, in company with the just who do your will." This prayer offers us the eschatological hope, which the Holy Eucharist conveys.

### **In the sanctuary**

The rest of the post-communion part takes place according to the unanimous liturgical

tradition in the sanctuary. But the decision of the Syro-Malabar Synod held on 15-20 November, 1999, which was approved by Rome and came into force officially on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2000, although several dioceses do not follow it, prescribes that the celebrant comes down to the Bema immediately after the ablution for the thanksgiving prayers and remains there facing the people till the end of the Qurbana. This new decision has no backing of tradition and theology. Even the English taksa of 2005 ignores this novelty. It is to be noted that Rome while approving the decision of the synod to conduct the preanaphoral part on the bema facing the people gives the following provision: "It should be noted that in churches which have restored the once-traditional Bema in the center of the nave, in the midst of the congregation – and such a restoration would certainly be desirable at least *ad experimentum* for example in liturgical centers and Seminary or monastic Chapels – then during the Liturgy of the Word the Clergy on the Bema would be seated in the midst of the people and facing in the same direction as they, in the direction of the lecterns for the readings of the Liturgy of the Word.

Furthermore, in churches so designed, it would be not be necessary for the presiding priest to come to the Bema for the concluding rites of the liturgy, which would be celebrated from the front of the questroma or sanctuary platform, facing the people."

### **Thanksgiving**

Like the Chaburah meal of the Jews, which was concluded, with the handing of the cup the Eucharistic celebration also ended in the early Church without a formal



thanksgiving because Eucharist means thanksgiving. In the opinion of G.Dix the reason for a corporate thanksgiving that appeared in the Eucharistic rite in the fourth century was that the Church lost all contact with the Jewish origins of the rite.<sup>[5]</sup> Thanksgiving in the Qurbana is comprised of Tesbota, invitation of the deacon and the sacerdotal thanksgiving.

### Tesbota

Although the literal meaning of this Syriac word is glory, it is really a common thanksgiving hymn. The rubrics in Brightmann says that it is sung alternately verse by verse by those in the nave and those in the sanctuary. He also notes that it is sung during the Holy Communion.<sup>[6]</sup> Theodore writes of a private thanksgiving of the people and a public one without specifying the prayers: "After you have received the communion you rightly and spontaneously offer thanksgiving and praise to God, so that you may not be ungrateful with regard to this Divine gift. You remain (in the Church) so that you may also offer thanksgiving and praise with every one, according to the regulations of the Church, because it behooves all those who received this spiritual food to offer thanksgiving to God publicly for this great gift."<sup>[7]</sup> It was Narsai who first reproduces the then existing prayer: "After the whole congregation has been communicated with the Body and Blood, they reply and say with love and rejoicing 'Our Lord Jesus, king to be adored

of all creatures, do away from us all harms by the power of Thy Mysteries; and when thou shinest forth at the end of the times for the redemption of all, may we go forth to meet Thee with confidence with hosannas. May we confess to Thy name for Thy goodness towards our race, who hast pardoned our debts and blotted them out by Thy Body and Thy Blood. And here and there may we be worthy to send up to Thy Godhead glory and comeliness an confession for ever and ever'<sup>[8]</sup>

Since the tesbota for Sunday is given by all manuscripts and early commentators it is proved to be very ancient. John of Basbor, the disciple of Narsai is believed to have composed it. Yatzin who was the contemporary of Mar Ishoyahb I and was a great biblical scholar composed the hymn for Maranaya (feasts of the Lord and other very important feasts). The third hymn for the commemoration of the dead and for ferial days was composed by Mar Timothy I. It is given in the manuscript Diarbekir 36 of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

When the manuscripts say that "they" should sing this hymn it is the choir, which is meant. While Ms Diarbekir 57 demands that the priest should begin this hymn, Berlin 38 says that the priest sings it aloud. Among the Chaldeans the deacon who helps to distribute Holy Communion waits till the end of the communion to begin this hymn. It is during this hymn that the ablution takes place. Since

[5] G.Dix 81

[6] Br.300-301

[7] Theodore of Mopsuestia, Catechetical Homilies, in Fr.G.Vavanikunnel(pub), Homilies and Interpretation on the holy Qurbana (Changanacherry 1977) 43-44. Hereafter quoted as Theodore

[8] Id 82



the Nestorian taksa gives several tesbotas the choir can choose as it wishes. Diampier taksa gives only the tesbota for maranaya, which is said not by the people but by the deacon. Dominicans give an additional five tesbotas in their *Ordo des offices ecclesiastiques des jours simples et d' autres* printed at Mosul in 1903, p75-85.

The prayer for maranaya shows how each member of our body participates in the adoration of God and how we thus reach the God-experience. In it the following blessings are requested: graces for each member of the body, renewal of the body unto new life, help for the congregation which has adored the Divinity, His great love which may remain always in us and abound in us for the singing of His praise, opening the gate to the prayers of us all, and entrance of our service into His presence.

The prayer for Sunday signifies the praise rendered to the heavenly king and to the most Holy Trinity by the earthly and heavenly beings. The first part contains praise to Jesus, our Lord and adorable king who by his passion triumphed over the tyrant death, Son of God who promised us a new life in the kingdom of heaven. He is requested to banish from our souls every harmful thing and increase in our country peace and mercy. The purpose is eschatological: "so that in the day of your manifestation we may live before you and run to meet you". On that day we shall sing hosanna thanking his name for the graces he has conferred on us. The greatest of his graces is that after coming down into the mortal world he atoned for our sins and wiped them away. He still pardons debts because of his great mercy.

The prayer for the ferial days emphasizes the power of the Eucharist to remit sins. It is Christ, king of ages, the image of both servant and creator who purifies the stains and forgives the offences. Then the prayer requests to the Eucharistic Lord to make us worthy to meet him with confidence at his manifestation and to offer Him praise with the host of angels.

This hymn at this place is called thesbotas because it abounds with praise and glorification. For example, the hymn for the maranaya says: "make the lips which have praised you within the sanctuary worthy to sing glory... may your great love always remain in us and may we abound in it for the singing of your praise". The prayer for Sunday says: "we shall sing hosanna thanking your Name for the grace you have conferred on us...glory to your Name for such a benefit bestowed on us. To you be worship and praise and glory for ever". Make us all worthy to meet you with confidence at your manifestation and to offer you praise with the host of angels". It can be considered as the culmination of the prayers of praise found in the ordinary and in the propers of the Qurbana. For example, the prayer introducing the marmitha says: "May the adorable and glorious name of the Holy Trinity be adored, glorified, honoured, exalted and blessed." The distinction between praise and adoration, praise and thanksgiving is not clear-cut in the liturgy. Bouyer says that this characteristic is based especially on the Old Testament in which thanksgiving is expressed in the praises offered to God. In Hebrew there is no special word for thankfulness, but it is expressed periphrastically by the words "praise" and "glorify".<sup>[9]</sup>

[9] J.B.Bouyer, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology* (London 1976 906-911).



## Eschatological Hope

All the three prayers aim at the glory, which they hope to obtain in the kingdom of heaven. The prayer for maranaya says: "Make the lips which have praised you within the sanctuary worthy to sing your glory. Let not the ears, which have heard the sound of your praise, hear the voice of terror. Let the eyes which have beheld your mercy also behold the blessed hope which is from you". The second prayer depicting Christ as the adorable king who triumphed over death says: "In the day of your manifestation we may live before you and run to meet you as you desire." The third prayer which presents Christ as the king of ages says: "Make us all worthy to meet you with confidence at your manifestation and to offer you praise with the host of angels".

Commentators emphasize the eschatological spirit of these prayers. Gabriel Qatraya says: "The hymn (Teshbota) the beginning of which is "Our Lord Jesus the adorable King" which we say at the end of the service of the mysteries is the symbol of that which happens in the coming world from all rational beings as we praise and exalt the heavenly King in whom it pleased Him that the fullness of divinity should dwell and through whom we adore the Trinity"<sup>[10]</sup> Mar Abdiso teaches: "The teshbota which is recited now "Our Lord Jesus Christ" or "strengthen" is the symbol of the praise rendered by the angels who stand around our Lord at the time

of the resurrection. This is a prayer that the Church and her children may gain strength, may obtain grace and mercy and may progress in all things which are done to participate in your holy mysteries in this world and in the world to come"<sup>[11]</sup> Timothy II says: the teshbota "Our Lord for the remission of debts.." or "Our Lord Jesus" is the similitude of the praise sung by the Apostles after receiving the holy mysteries and before starting for the Mount of Olives. Before this there are many imageries. It reminds the hymns which men are going to sing in the coming world and the praises sung by angels standing around the Lord at the time of His resurrection. Again this reminds such prayers: 'through the reception of these mysteries may the Church and her children resurrect; may they find mercy and grace; let them progress in all things they do through participation in these mysteries'.<sup>[12]</sup> Bar Zobi comments: "The hymn which is recited at the end of the Mysteries is the symbol of the hymn which, in the world to come, angels and men will sing in praise of Jesus, the king of heights and of the depth of the two worlds, celestial and terrestrial. In Him they adore the invisible Divinity and the resting of the desire of their spirits is the contemplation of His Body. When they are without strength in the search of the unattainable Hidden, their spirits take refuge in His body to take rest from their sufferings, This is why He is the King above all, because in Him they adore the very Hidden

[10] Gabriel Qatraya Bar Lipha, Interpretation of the Offices, in G.Vavanikunnel, p102. Hereafter quoted as G.Qatraya

[11] Thomas Manooramparampil (tr.ed), Pithakenmarude Koodashabhashyagal (Kottayam 1992) 42

[12] Timothy II, Causes of Seven Mysteries, in Thomas Manooramparampil, Id 164-164. Hereafter quoted as Timothy II

[13] Dr. Thomas Manooramparampil, (tr.ed), John Bar Zobi's Explanation of the Divine Mysteries (Kottayam 1992) 61. Hereafter quoted as Bar Zobi.



Divinity”<sup>[13]</sup> George of Arbel acknowledges that tesbota is a common hymn of thanksgiving sung during the distribution of communion and that the present hymns for maranaya and Sundays were used in his days: “They add a (hymn of) praise (tesbota), which is a common thanksgiving of good and bad; of the wise and the foolish; and so to each of the senses mentioned in it they give (its) gratification. He who is sanctified in all his senses becomes perfect in the kingdom...and so this (hymn of) praise (tesbota) says: “strengthen, O Lord, the hands that are stretched out”. And it enumerates the hands and the eye and the ear and the mouth and the tongue and the feet “and the bodies that have eaten”. And “great love” which is the fulfilling that (takes place) in the soul. And when this thanksgiving of each of the senses is fulfilled, then they turn to another, which is “our Lord Jesus”: and this is more particularly a common (or congregational) (prayer). And thus in many ways they celebrate the reception of mysteries, which is the enjoyment (of heaven). And when men are feasting, each one of them intones (lit: brings) a joyful verse (Qantas) of song, and when one sings the verse, all rejoice and answer after him: so also is it here. - When they praise the Lord who has come “with every breath” and with all the verses (quintal). And they accompany Christ (priest) until He distributes (has distributed) the Mysteries and enters (the apse)<sup>[14]</sup>.

### Invitation of Deacon

When the celebrant enters the madbha after the distribution of the Holy Communion, the

deacon addresses the congregation: “Therefore, let us all, who, by the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit, have approached the holy altar and have been accounted worthy to participate in these glorious, holy, life-giving and divine mysteries give thanks together and glorify God who gave them”. This invitation reminds that it is God who gives this gift and that it is the grace of the Holy Spirit, which enabled us to approach the holy altar and participate in the holy mysteries. It proclaims the Trinitarian dimension of the Qrbana. The people respond: “Praise to him for his ineffable gift”(2 Cur 9:15). George of Arbel specifies that it was deacon Michael who proclaims it at the door of the apse after the priest has completed the Qurbana and gone up to the madbha.<sup>[15]</sup> and reproduces the same invitation which is given in the present taksa. He comments thus: “We now who have been accounted worthy of all this grace, and have been set free from the passions of sin, and have become heirs of the heavenly kingdom – “let us confess (or “give thanks”) to Him now and praise Him” who, when we were unworthy by reason of our sins, turned to us in His many mercies and redeemed us from death and inconstancy, so that we are heirs of his good things. What then? “Let us confess (or “give thanks”) to Him and praise Him”. Then the people, obedient to their director Gabriel, render glory (or “praise) and say in common: “Glory to Him for the greatness of His gifts<sup>[16]</sup>, of which mortals are not sufficient to speak, which now has been poured upon us. “But when he (deacon) has

[14] R.H.Connolly (tr), A commentary on the Mass By the Nestorian George, Bishop of Mosul and Arbel, Pub by Robert Mathews (Kottayam 2000) 135-136. Hereafter quoted as George of Arbel.

[15] Id 137

[16] Id 137



seen that the people have fully rendered thanks, then he also makes request and commands: "Pray ye now, that peace may be with us". Narsai also states that it is an invitation for thanksgiving: "Then the herald of the Church cries with his proclamation, and urges the people to give thanks; and thus he says: "All we that have been made worthy of the gift of the Mysteries, let us give thanks and worship and glorify the God of all".<sup>[17]</sup> Already the Apostolic Constitutions VIII, 14,1-3 speaks of the proclamation: "Now we have received the precious body and the precious blood of Christ, let us give thanks to Him who has thought us worthy to partake of these His holy mysteries; and let us beseech Him that it may not be to us for condemnation, but for salvation, to the advantage of soul and body, to the preservation of piety, to the remission of sins, and to life of the world to come. Let us arise, and by the grace of Christ let us dedicate ourselves to God, to the only unbegotten God, and to His Christ."

### Thanksgiving of the Celebrant

Gabriel Qatraya, Bar Zobi and Bar Lipha do not mention the thanksgiving of the celebrant. Its existence, however, goes back at least to the time of Narsai who, commenting on it, says that the priest gives thanks for the glorious mysteries and begs God that the participants may become acceptable before him in thoughts, words and works together"<sup>[18]</sup> Besides being a

thanksgiving, it is a petition to God that the communion may effect propitiation and not cause condemnation on account of sins.<sup>[19]</sup> Timothy II offers another explanation: "The slotha beginning with "terrible.." and the following slotha remind the two blessings, which our Lord imparted to his disciples: the first before his passion and the second before his ascension. Both of them are also thanksgiving prayers. It is prayed here that there may be with us through the participation of these mysteries pardon of debts, remission of sins, grace and fellowship of their giver. It is also beseeched that these may not be according to the measure of our works deserve."<sup>[20]</sup>

The rituals prescribe that the celebrant says these prayers in an elevated voice standing at the center of the altar. Diarbekir 57 prescribes that the celebrant should pray with extended hands. The prayer which George of Arbel gives for Sundays, commemoration and feast days has now disappeared. The taksa gives now one set for Sundays and feast days and another set for ferial days. In both sets the first prayer is addressed to God and the second prayer to Christ. Narsai, George of Arbel and Abdiso give only the first set of prayers. George of Arbel says that it symbolizes the teaching which Jesus gave before his ascension.

### *For Sundays and Feast days*

George of Arbel is the first one who presents the full text of the sacerdotal

[17] Naysai, An Exposition of the Mysteries in G.Vavanikunnel 82. Hereafter quoted as Narsai; ;Cfr also Bar Zobi p.61

[18] Narsai 82

[19] Abd'Iso Bar Berkia, Ordo Judiciorum Ecclesiasticorum (Roma 1940) 100. Hereafter quoted as Mar Abdiso

[20] Dr.Thomas Mannooramparampil, Pithakkenmarude,164



thanksgiving which is very similar to the one said now on Sundays and feast days.<sup>[21]</sup> It confesses that it is appropriate to render praise, adoration and glory to the adorable name of the Lord. It thanks God for the graces conferred on the community. The following are the graces: 1). To relish the sweetness of his life giving and divine words .2). To glorify His name with the angels.3). To partake in the holy mysteries he has given us.4). To sing constantly hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the Most High

Arbel says that after the first prayer the assembly made prostration saying: "Amen, Bless, O: Lord": "And then the people, after their custom, worshipping on the earth, as though ashamed before their creator and the greatness of His honour, render glory with the seal of Amen: and they ask of Him that he will bless them"<sup>[22]</sup> Now there is no prostration. No special gesture is prescribed for the celebrant for blessing. This prayer has the external form of the thanksgiving of the celebrant.

The second prayer thanks Jesus for having granted special graces for the participation in the holy mysteries. George of Arbel comments it thus: "Lo, in Christ, who is a son of your race, you have taken refuge: He it is that has made you worthy of all these honours which are in His enjoyment—which (enjoyment) His body and His blood is after the manner of an earnest. May He grant to all reasonable beings in common to praise Him with all

(their) senses-when this earnest of the Mysteries which we have received shall have been fulfilled for us in the kingdom of heaven, when the resurrection comes in the end-together with all His elect, by His grace and His mercy".<sup>[23]</sup> This prayer qualifies Jesus in invocatory form Our Lord, Our God, king, Saviour and life-giver. All these epithets are derived from the Christ-experience of the early Church. It is the same ex-pression, which the Holy Eucharist conveys to us only because He makes us worthy to receive His all-hallowing Body and precious blood<sup>[24]</sup>. We are bound to please Him in word and deed, thought and action. Even for this we need His help. Holy Eucharist, which we receive, is a pledge for the pardon of offences, forgiveness of sins, for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for the new life in the kingdom of heaven with all those who have pleased Him. It points out the chief effect of the Holy Eucharist.

The chief effect of the Holy Qurbana, which is the reenactment of the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus, is the remission of sins. This fact is evident in several prayers. The prayer for giving Holy Communion is an example: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ be to the devout believer unto the remission of sins". "The precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is to the devout believer unto the remission of sins".<sup>[25]</sup> The remission of sins removes the block to receive the effect of the Holy Communion. The most important among them are resurrection of bodies and new life

[21] George of Arbel 138

[22] Id

[23] Id

[24] Order for the Solemn Raza of the Syro-Malabar Church (Trivandrum 1986)50,51,55 and 58

[25] Id 63



in the kingdom of heaven. In the litany of forgiveness<sup>[26]</sup> we pray: "Let them be to us, O Lord, unto the resurrection of our bodies and the salvation of our souls". This prayer elucidates the relation between the Qurbana and the resurrection. The words of St.Ephrem are here worth remembering: " His bread beyond doubt gives witness to our resurrection because if he blessed food how much more does he bless those who eat it".<sup>[27]</sup>

Prayers repeatedly proclaim that Holy Qurbana grants everlasting life in the kingdom of heaven. In the Eucharist we receive the resurrected Christ. The life, which the Holy Eucharist imparts, gives the grace to be with him. Eucharist is the spiritual food, which gives eternal life and preserves it (Jo. 6: 35-59). This life is the divine reality, which works in man in relation to Christ. This life which is the gift of the Father (Jo 3:16) the Son gives to those who believe in him: "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full"(Jo 1`0:10).

The text enumerates other fruits of the Eucharist: We have ministered to, worshipped and honoured Jesus Christ<sup>[28]</sup>. May it obtain for us help and salvation and life-everlasting in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>[29]</sup> for the benefit of the whole congregation and for the praise

of your adorable Trinity,<sup>[30]</sup> for the pardon of offences and forgiveness of sins, and for the great hope of the resurrection from the dead and for the new life in the kingdom of heaven, to us and to the holy Church of Christ<sup>[31]</sup>, for the renewal and salvation of mankind,<sup>[32]</sup> to thank, adore, glorify the magnificent, awesome, adorable name of the glorious Trinity and his goodness towards mankind,<sup>[33]</sup> remission of debts, forgiveness of sins, salvation of souls , reconciliation of the whole world and peace and tranquility of all the Churches<sup>[34]</sup>, for the congregation, celebrant and for the whole world,<sup>[35]</sup> for our life and for the peace of the world and for the crowning of the year,<sup>[36]</sup> that we may be perfect witness of your glory, pure sanctuaries in your honour and holy temples fit for your habitation<sup>[37]</sup>, that it may be to us unto the pardon of debts, remission of sins and the great hope of resurrection from the dead and new life in the kingdom of heaven<sup>[38]</sup>. In the diptychs and in the fourth kussapa there are prayers for the living and the dead.

### For Ferial days

The prayer renders thanks to the most holy Trinity for the great gift of the Eucharist. It confesses the propitiatory efficacy of the

[26] Id 57

[27] Carmina Nisibena 46:11

[28] Order 69.

[29] Id 40

[30] Id 43

[31] Id 55

[32] Id 7

[33] Id13

[34] Id 40

[35] Id 41

[36] Id 43

[37] Id 58

[38] Id 50-51



Eucharist. The second prayer qualifies sin-remitting Qurbana as Christ's adorable gift from on High.

### Greeting of peace

In the Qurbana of the Church of the East on Sunday and feast days there is a greeting of peace after the thanksgiving prayers. After the veil is closed, when the priests in Qanke exchange peace one another, those who are in the haikla recite Ps 148:1-6 and Ps 116. After each verse of Psalm a qanona is recited.<sup>[39]</sup> Although many manuscripts of the present liturgy and Narsai do not give this peace greeting, George of Arbel, Gabriel Qatraya, Mardin 19, Diarbekir 48, Jezira-Alqosh ms give it. In Diarbekir 57 deacons and priests kiss the altar one after another. In Diabetic 48 only the celebrant after kissing the altar stands on the right side. At that time all clerics exchange peace one to another. In Martin 19 in between the Psalm 148 and 116 Ps 150 is recited with Qanona. Kelaita says that he does not know with what intention these two Psalms are recited in monasteries and that they are not to be recited on feast days and that the manner of reciting was adopted recently without much enquiry. Timothy II mentions the greeting of peace ad not the recitation of Psalms. Gabriel Qatraya and Bar Lipha mention it after the final hutama, while it appears in George of Arbel just before the

final blessing<sup>[40]</sup>. G.Qatraya attributes to it a profound spiritual significance: "The 'pax' which they give one another after the reception of the mysteries is the symbol of the holy union by which we are united there (heaven) as members of one another and all of us are united under the head of the Church and the first born from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ"<sup>[41]</sup> Mar Abdiso restricts it to those in the sanctuary, fixes it just before the invitation of the deacon for the thanksgiving and ascribes the symbolism of our union in this world and in the future.<sup>[42]</sup> Bar Zobi views it as the sign of the accord and perfect love which the Church enjoys<sup>[43]</sup> Brightmann notes another rite of peace after the hutama in which the priest and the people give peace one to the other.<sup>[44]</sup>

### Our Father

George of Arbel gives it after the final blessing and claims that it was introduced by Mar Timothy I. But Ishoyahb IV says that a Patriarch before him introduced it at the beginning and at the end of all services. He however does not mention his name. It is clear from him that the qanona was added to the Our Father by Mar Timothy I.<sup>[45]</sup> Kelaita and Jezira-Alqosh MS give it after the peace greeting. In them instead of the two prayers of the present text other two prayers and another prayer of blessing are given for ferial

[39] Sleenanmarude Kudashakramamgal,(Trichur 2003) 98-101.

[40] G.Qatraya 103; Bar Lipha Abraham, Interpretatio Officiorum, ed. R.H. Connolly, CSCO76 (1953) 166; George of Arbel 82

[41] G.Qatraya 103

[42] Mar Abdiso 102.

[43] Bar Zobi 62

[44] Br 304

[45] Van Unnik ,p181' Questions 105-107



days. The same prayers are found in all manuscripts in which there is no greeting of peace. In Mardin 19 after the kiss of peace there is a singing of Psalm and after that two priestly prayers are given. In Diarbekir 48 the priest kisses the altar and then moves to the right side to say the Our Father. In Diarbekir 48 and 57 during the priestly prayer after the Our Father greeting of peace takes place. Speaking about the relevance of 'Our Father' Timothy II says that it shows that all our prayers are going to end here. Abdiso explains: "Our Father which is recited here again is the confirmation of our petition and prayers because, as we have said, it contains all prayers".<sup>[46]</sup> George of Arbel says that it was said by those within and those outside the sanctuary together signifying that all of them have been delivered from the passion of inconstancy and have become enjoyers of the body and the blood, which are an earnest of the kingdom.<sup>[47]</sup>

### Hutama

The meaning of hutama is sealing. With this prayer the Qurbana ends officially. The celebrant says this prayer facing the congregation on the right side of the entrance of the Madbha. Urmi (p 30), Mosul (p.50), Kelaita (P.55, 56), and Vat.Syr. 66, Chaldean text printed in Rome (P.293), Malabar taksa (p 39) and Puthenpally taksa (p.46) prescribe that it is to be recited at the door of the sanctuary. From the sign of cross given in the

text it is concluded that he blesses the people in the sign of the cross.

In the manuscripts Diarbekir 57 and 48 priest says a blessing prayer, which is called hutama. Mardin 19 prescribes that it is to be said by the celebrant. The same prayer is given in several manuscripts and taksas as hutama for ferial days. Diarbekir 48 has given three hutamae and gives them in succession: the hutama in the sanctuary, the hutama of the ablutions and the hutama at the door of the sanctuary. The third one is the final blessing for Sundays and feast days in several manuscripts and taksas. The hutama in the sanctuary was recited before the final blessing as the hutama over the deacon.<sup>[48]</sup> George of Arbel and Mardin 19 give the hutama at the door of the Madbha. The present taksa of the Nestorians of Trichur gives the following: For Sundays, feast days and commemorations hutama at the big door of the sanctuary. on ferial days in the Qanke; for the dead on ordinary days at the entrance of the Qanke. After the ordering there is silent prayer for the priest and the final hutama.<sup>[49]</sup> The prayer of blessing varies among the commentators. Narsai has: "He that hath blessed us with every blessing of the Spirit in heaven, may He also now bless us all with the power of His Mysteries"<sup>[50]</sup>. George of Arbel gives another formula: "He who now has associated our whole race in all perfect things through the Mediator Jesus Christ, may He bless you and

[46] Kudashabhashyangal 43

[47] George of Arbel 139-140

[48] Donald Attwater, *Eastern Catholic Worship* (New York 1945) 207-208

[49] Mar Narsai press(pub), *Slechanmarude Kudhasakramam* (Trichur 2003) 102-107.

[50] Narsai 30



renew you and add to you abundant honour  
“ [51]

Coming to the use of hutamae in the Malabar Qurbana R omits two hutamae from M “Carmen ...” and “Causa quod benedixisti..” [52] M omits six hutamae and blessing over the deacon which are given in R: “Illi qui condonavit”, “Dominus Noster”, “Ens supremum”, “Pater qui benedixisti”, “Ille qui benedicit”, “Ille qui benedicit in caelis and” “Maria quae”. [53] The last one which is found in the local editions of R and in a Malabar manuscript of 1708 [54] is of Maronite origin and has been omitted in the restored Qurbana. The prayer known in R as “prayer over deacon” has become in the restored Qurbana a hutama. Out of the seven hutamae given in Taksa 60 only four are accepted in the later versions. The 1988 Roman document allows making necessary adaptations in the final hutama (Nr 86). In the light of this permission the synod has approved special hutamae for each Sunday, feast day and special occasions so as to make them proprias.

Let us now examine the hutamas given in the body of the taksa.

1. *For Sundays, feast days and days of commemoration:*

-God -given blessings are remembered “God...blessed us with all the spiritual gifts in heaven through our Lord, Jesus Christ. He has invited us to his kingdom and called us to his glory. We have been called to the most

longed for beatitude which neither passes away, nor ceases nor has an end”.

-The promise of Christ for the Eucharist is presented: “Amen, Amen I say to you: whoever eats my Body and drinks my Blood remains in me and I in him and I will raise him up on the last day and he will not be condemned, but will pass on from death to everlasting life”

-We pray that those who participate in the Qurbana may obtain fruits according to the promise. He should bless our congregation, preserve our assembly and make our people who have come and been gladdened by the participation in his glorious, holy, life-giving and divine mysteries. They should be marked with the sign of the cross and be saved from all deceits open and hidden.

### *On Ferial Days*

We have ministered to, worshiped and honoured Christ through the celebration of the Eucharist. The expected benefit is that Christ makes us worthy of the magnificent glory of his kingdom of eternal joy with his holy angels. We pray that his mercy and grace may be showered upon us and upon the whole world, upon the Church and her children.

The alternate prayer exhorts to sing praises in his Church to Him who pardoned our offences by His Body and blotted out our sins by His Blood. The congregation is addressed as people of God and sheep of

[51] George of Arbel 139

[52] Raulin J.F., *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Diamperitana synodo* (Roma 1745) 329-333

[53] *Sacrum Beatorum Apostolorum quod est sacrum primum* (Ernakulam 1904) 108-128. Hereafter quoted as R.

[54] Car P.J. Podipara, *The Present Syro-Malabar Liturgy: Menezian or Rozian*, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 23 (1957) 329



His flock. The prayer entreats that He may multiply in the congregation his mercy and his grace and the right hand of his providence be upon them.

### *On Days of commemoration of the dead*

The essence of this prayer is the deep faith that the holy Eucharist can remit sins and debts. It is concluded with the petition to bless the assembly and the Church.

In the hutama all profess that they will live in goodness and holiness, and in accordance with the experience derived from the Qurbana and enjoying its good fruits. We should live as a new creation (1 Cor 5:15-20) aiming at eternal glory (1 Cor 4:16-18).

After the hutama the faithful used to kiss the hand of the celebrant or the urara. Since he does not come down from the madbha this custom ceased to exist.

According to the commentators, this final blessing symbolizes the blessing, which our Lord imparts to the Apostles before the ascension.<sup>[55]</sup> For Narsai it typifies the blessing of our resurrection and glorification with the Lord and embodies the petition which he puts in these words: "In this world wherein we dwell with all passions, may He keep our lives from hidden and open harms; and as He has made us worthy of the reception of His Mysteries by His grace, may He make us all worthy to become temples for His Divinity; and with every breath let us confess and worship and praise Him for His gift unspeakable by tongue of flesh"<sup>[56]</sup> Timothy

II comments: "Hutama is the blessing at the door of the Qanke. It signifies the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles on that great day of Pentecost in the cenacle. Having been filled with the Holy Spirit they were sent to all the nations of all places. It signifies that our Lord on the occasion of his ascension raised His hands and blessed the Apostles".<sup>[57]</sup>

Therefore hutama alludes not only to the mysteries of the ascension and Pentecost but also to the mysteries of salvation operating till we attain eternal life in heaven together with our Saviour.

### **Sign of the cross**

At the end of the hutama the celebrant blesses the congregation by making sign of the cross over the people. The hutama of Sunday ends thus: "May you be marked with the sign of the Lord's cross and be saved from all deceits open and hidden". Onitha d'Qanke sings: "The cross that has been the cause of our good and by which our mortal humanity was set free, be for us, O Lord, a strong fortress, and by this cross we shall overcome the wicked one and all his device". The aim of the sign of the cross is to separate a thing from secular matters and dedicate it for God. Another aim is to realize that the cross is the image of Christ the king.

### **Farewell to the altar**

In 1957 text after the hutama the veil is closed and the priest kisses the altar before he goes out saying: "Remain in peace, altar of forgiveness Remain in peace, sepulchre of our

[55] Narsai 30, G. Qatraya 102-103; Bar Zobi 415; Abdiso 102

[56] Narsai 30-31

[57] Kudashabhashyngal 165.



Lord. May the oblation, which I received from you, avail unto me for the pardon of offences and the forgiveness of sins. I know not whether I shall come again and offer another sacrifice upon you".<sup>[58]</sup> Ordo prescribes that the priest can return to the sacristy after the Qurbana and then after unvesting he can come back to the sanctuary to kiss the altar saying the above prayer. (No.56). It is not clear whether the prayer as given in the taksa 1968 is said in the sanctuary, or at the altar or on the way to the sanctuary.<sup>[59]</sup>

In Antiochean and Maronite rites there is a rite of farewell to the altar. The prayer given in the Malabar taksa is very similar to the one given in the Maronite rite. It is evident from the prayer that its purpose is to remember the dead. Hanssens says on the Syrian farewell service: "The celebrant after unvesting says a prayer for the dead which is called *sedro* and then saying this beautiful prayer and kissing in three places on the altar says farewell to the altar: "Holy altar of the Lord, remain in peace. I do not know whether I shall come back. May the Lord give me grace to see you in the Church of the first borns of heaven. I rely on this assurance. Holy and purifying altar of the Body and Blood, which I received from you, remain in peace. Let it be unto me for the remission<sup>[60]</sup> of sins. Holy altar, table of life, remains in peace. Pray for me to Christ that I may not forget you from now on for ever". Its abbreviated form with a modified structure has been given in the same place of

the Maronite Qurbana: " Holy altar, remain in peace. Let me come back to you in peace. May the Qurbana, which I received from you, avail unto me for the pardon of offences and forgiveness of sins. Let me stand before the throne of Christ without spot and shame. I do not know whether I shall come back to offer another Qurbana on you ..."<sup>[61]</sup>. We do not know when the farewell service began in the East Syrian rite. Assemani, a Maronite priest included in the Malabar Qurbana a prayer very similar to that of the Maronite rite in 1774. This greeting signifies that the priest always expects entrance to the true altar of the heavenly Jerusalem or death.

Though foreign in origin, this rite is most appropriate to the Qurbana since it shows great veneration and attaches a great spiritual importance to the altar. That a great veneration for the altar existed is obvious in the treatise of Ishyahb IV who out of 123 questions devote the following ones to elucidate the various aspects of the veneration of the altar: Q 1-8 (consecration of the altar), Q.10-14 ,28-31 and 39 (desecration of the altar), Q.97-99 (setting of different articles on the altar), Q.100 (the mystagogical meaning of the fans beside the altar. The taksa prescribes the kiss of the altar twelve times although the restored Qurbana reduces it to six times.

This veneration is justified by the rich symbolism attached to the altar in the Christian liturgies. It is the place of the divine presence

[58] Order 44

[59] Taksas 68,p.56

[60] Hanssens,J.M.Institutiones Liturgicae de Ritibus Orientalibus III: De Missa Rituum Orientalium (Romae 1932).533 No. 1429

[61] Archdale A.King,The Rites of Eastern Christendom Vol.I (Roma 1947)312



and of communication with God. Narsai calls it the throne of God upon which He will be seen by the watchers and men in days of His revelation.<sup>[62]</sup> Christ comes down to meet the Eucharistic assembly and they approach the altar to meet him there. It is the gathering place of the Christian community to pray God and beg his blessings and pardon of sins.

It is similar to the ladder in the vision of Jacob, which links heaven and earth. It is the door of heaven. St. John saw in his vision a door of heaven open, heard a sound "come up here" and saw the heavenly court praising the one who was enthroned there (Re. 4:1-11). The altar is the door, which enables the faithful to have a glance at the heavenly life. It is the end of the earth and the beginning of heaven. Since Christ opens its doors and comes down to them they can enter with him there.

It is the banquet table. As the Israelites eat from the same table the paschal meal which is the sacrificial meal of the Old Testament so also the participants eat this paschal meal from the offerings which are set on the altar are consecrated and given back to them in the Eucharistic sacrifice as our food and drink. The table aspect reminds the participants of the Last Supper.

It represents the cross since the sacrifice of the cross is re-presented there.

The usage in this prayer "remain in peace", sepulcher of our Lord" reflects the most

popular symbolism of the altar as being the tomb of our Lord, and the priests who are in the sanctuary bear the image of those Apostles who met together at the sepulcher.<sup>[63]</sup> Altar is the symbol of Christ.<sup>[64]</sup> By kissing and incensing we draw grace. Narsai says: "He kisses with love and affection the holy altar and trusts to receive sanctification through his lips".<sup>[65]</sup> McEvey explains: "A kiss means a promise to be faithful... So each time the priest kisses the altar, he is promising again to be true and obedient. It reminds him of the close relation between his life and the altar and of the duty to be faithful to his vocation".<sup>[66]</sup> Therefore if we consider the great symbolism of the altar in the liturgy, it is meaningful to maintain this rite of the farewell to the altar as the conclusion of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

### Historical Evolution

The following seems to be the probable historical evolution of the rite: In the earliest period there were only two prayers after communion: the prayer of thanksgiving and a prayer of blessing which seems to have been a prayer of inclination as in the other Oriental rites. The ablutions would have been performed after these prayers. To them was added before the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century or before a hutama, at the end of which the celebrant blessed the people with his hand. By this time the practice of giving the kiss of peace in the sanctuary before the hutama had begun. During the sixth century the custom

[62] Narsai 58

[63] Narsai 58; Bar Zobi 34-35 ; G. Qatraya 95.

[64] L. Petrus, *The Meaning of the Altar in Sacred Scripture and in some early Writings* (Melbourne 1965; A.G. Martimort, *The Signs of the Covenant* 165-166; W.B. McGRORY, *The Mass and the Resurrection* (Roma 1964) 101-102; J. Vellian, *The People around the Altar* (Malayalam), (Kottayam 1967) 1-15

[65] Narsai 61

[66] R.O. McEVEY, *Sacred Actions* (London 1959) 20.



grew up in monasteries of chanting the two Psalms with antiphons during the kiss of peace. By the end of the century this custom had begun to spread to secular Churches. The ceremony itself was canonized by Isha yab III, but probably not the psalms which were not mentioned by the Anonymous. It seems that one or two priestly prayers followed the ceremony and the Anonymous notes that it was a priest other than the celebrant who said them. As for the ablutions, they may well have been continued to be performed, as they had formerly been done after the two old sacerdotal prayers (thanksgiving and blessing) and therefore concurrently with the kiss of peace.

The next step was the introduction of the our Father by Timothy I. It should be noted that it was chanted with qanona as at the beginning, but without "glory to God." The oldest manuscripts testify that it was introduced immediately after the original sacerdotal prayers. It was during the chanting of the our Father that the clergy in the sanctuary gave one another the kiss of peace. Where the psalms were not chanted, this gave no special difficulty and the prayers that followed could have been said in a low voice audible only to those in the sanctuary. Perhaps this is what led to the addition of a hutama for those in the sanctuary after the prayers. It is to be noted that the two prayers and the hutama that were recited after the kiss of peace were not composed for this purpose. Judging by their texts they are much more suitable for their present use as alternates to the oldest ones. Macomber suggests that they were composed for the liturgy of the presanctified. But the second prayer is not a blessing of the

people. This can indicate that they were composed after the introduction of the hutama, when the original sense of the prayer of inclination had begun to be lost. In those places where the Psalms were sung during the kiss of peace, a different solution was sought. In Mardin 19 after the two original sacerdotal prayers the Our Father was chanted. Then, while they gave the pax to one another they sang the psalms, after which they had the two other priestly prayers and the hutama in the sanctuary, an alternate prayer and hutama entitled "of the monastery" were added and then the final blessing of the people. Kelaita and Jezira –Alqosh MSS offer another solution, according to which the Our Father was inserted after the kiss of peace and its psalmody. It is not clear whether this solution neither goes back to the time of Timothy I nor is it clear at what time the additional prayers and hutama were suppressed. from the liturgy of Sundays and feasts. The final step taken by the Chaldeans and the Malabarians was to suppress the kiss of peace.

The ablutions probably continued to be performed after the old sacerdotal prayers at the time of the kiss of peace and the our Father. In the case of ferial liturgy, there would have been only one priest and one deacon in the sanctuary who would have been occupied with ablutions at the time of the kiss of peace. Since the prayers and the hutama, which normally followed the kiss of peace, were used in the place of the ancient sacerdotal prayers and for the hutama at the door of the sanctuary, others were substituted here, which became associated with the ablutions. Then, when the kiss of peace was suppressed, these prayers remained with the ablutions, and

when the Chaldeans shifted the position of the ablutions the prayers moved with them. It is possible that the prayers of ablution were originally composed for occasions when the communion continued to be distributed after the liturgy and then were assumed into the ferial liturgy. The prayers refer only to thanksgiving for the communion just received. They are applicable to the people and to those performing the ablutions.

### Nercha

There is even now a custom that the priest blesses the bread (appam) or pachor (rice pudding), which are brought by the faithful on Sundays and feast days. They are then distributed to the faithful. In the past they used to kiss the hand of the celebrant on the Qanke and eat the nercha, which was distributed at the entrance of the Church or in some other convenient places. Nercha is considered to be the continuation of the agape of the early Church. Pursana (eulogia) originally is the rest of the bread, which was baked as the Eucharistic bread. According to the rite given by Brightmann, the faithful kiss the hand-cross of the priest and the eulogia, and receive it from a priest or deacon at the entrance of the baptistery.<sup>[67]</sup> The prayer of Mary is said during the distribution of pursana: "May the prayer, o my Lord, of the holy virgin and the request of the blessed mother and the beseeching and entreating of her that is full of grace, mart maryam the blessed, and the great power of the victorious cross, and the divine help, and the petition of mar John the Baptist be with us continually at all seasons

and times, Lord of all, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen".

None of the modern taksas or manuscripts mentions pursana. The Anglican missionaries MacLean and Browne testify to the continued existence among the Nestorians of the Urmia until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since George of Arbel and Isho Yahb IV refer to this rite it is proved to be an ancient rite. According to George of Arbel the celebrant blessed the pursane and distributed among the clergy in the sanctuary and not to the faithful outside the sanctuary. The original purpose of this eulogia seems to be of breaking the fast in monastic communities during the penitential seasons when the liturgy was celebrated in the afternoon. These authors do not restrict it to the monasteries and the latter author seems to indicate that it was distributed to the people also.<sup>[68]</sup> Pursana should not be taken to the altar and should not be brought beyond the lamp hung in the middle of the sanctuary<sup>[69]</sup> Mardin 19 puts the blessing of the pursane between the alternate hutama in the sanctuary of monasteries and the final hutama over the people. According to this manuscript the whole rite was performed by the qankaya while holding the paten with the pursane in his hands.

### Theology

The main ideas of the post communion part are the following:

1. Spiritual nourishment. Holy Qurbana is a sacrifice in which bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Holy

[67] Brightmann F.E. and Hammond E., *Liturgies Eastern and Western 1: Eastern Liturgies* (Oxford 1896) 304

[68] Van Unnik 64 and 81, p176 and 250



Communion consists in receiving this Body and Blood. They are a real food of immortality. Every one is bound to partake of this meal.

2. Eschatological dimension. Holy Qurbana is the pledge of eternal life. The Church is the Type of heaven and its liturgy is the image of heavenly liturgy.

3. It is a participation in the resurrection of Christ. We receive the Risen Lord with the hope that we shall rise with him.

4. Our participation in the Eucharist is the symbol of our participation with him in the Kingdom of heaven. The recipients share divine life and bear witness to resurrection and eternal life.

5. There is a complete transformation by the Holy Communion. Resurrected Christ assimilates us into himself, into his resurrected state. The prayers speak about the effects of communion: "May this pledge which we have received and are receiving avail us through your grace and mercy, O Lord, for the pardon of offences and forgiveness of sins for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for the new life in the kingdom Of heaven..."<sup>[70]</sup>

It is by confessing the effects-salvation, new life and other graces -which we have received through the Eucharist that we give thanks and praise the following can be specially noted as the effects, graces and fruits of the Eucharist:

1. We are given remission of debts, forgiveness of sins as the removal of the obstacles for graces

2. Our weak nature is made worthy to bless God's name with the angels.

3. We are made partakers of the sacred mysteries of God's gifts.

4. We are delighted with the sweetness of God's life-giving words.

5. We are given the pledge of resurrection and new life in the kingdom of heaven.

6. We are given inheritance in heaven that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading

(1 Peter 1:4).

7. We are given the glory of the kingdom of heaven, eternal joy together with the angels and seat at the right hand of God.

Only the children of God can experience of these gifts. It is from this

Conviction and experience that we give praise and thank to God .We have to raise our filial gratitude in the Eucharist .It should not be mere human feeling. The feeling expressed by Jesus was from His divine Sonship .The same feeling of praise and gratitude inspired by the divine sonship must be raised to the Father.

[69] Id.Q80,p.175-176 ,256-257.

[70] Order 67

# Hindu Perspective of Music in Worship:

## Source of Inspiration for the Christian Liturgical Music in India

Pauly Maniyattu

### Introduction

Music has a very significant role to play in all forms of religious worship. 'Word' is one of the important elements of sacred space-time and music is perhaps the best possible way of presenting human word in the sacred space-time. This truth is beautifully expressed by St. Augustine: "He who sings prays twice."<sup>[1]</sup> All religions pay great attention to the proper use of music in their cultic celebrations. Hindu religion assigns great importance to music in its worship. No prayer is simply recited. Any prayer or sacred text is chanted. The Hindus took extra ordinary care with regard to the proper chanting of the mantras. Christians in India can learn a lot from the Hindu understanding of music used in the concrete situation of worship. The present article is an attempt to find out the theological and cultic importance of music in Hindu

worship and thus to recognize the elements of the Hindu music which could be assimilated into the Christian liturgical music.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 1. Music in Ancient India

In the ancient India no ceremony, neither religious nor social, was performed without music.<sup>[3]</sup> Music was thought to be a necessary part, not only of secular enjoyments and of religious devotion, but of bloody warfares<sup>[4]</sup> and funeral ceremonies. Music is said to have been performed by a number of devotees day and night. Temples and halls have been thronged by numerous musicians and bards. Music was so much developed and spread that different melodies were set for different parts of the country and for the day and night and even for different seasons.

In the past every Hindu of high caste was taught, more or less, to praise and pray to his

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[1] *Patrologia Latina* vol. 36, 914.

[2] The present article is based on the paper "The Role of Music in Hindu Worship" presented at the International Liturgical Congress of *Societas Liturgica* held in Turku, Finland in August, 1997. See also P. Maniyattu, "Music in Hindu Traditions of Worship and its Influence on Christian Liturgical Music in India", *Studia Liturgica* Vol. XXVIII, No.1, 1998, pp. 46-73.

[3] J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, New Delhi 1983, 587. Cf. also K. Mitra, "Diffusion of Socio-Religious Culture in North India", in H. Bhattacharyya, ed., *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV: *The Religions*, Calcutta 1983, 515.

[4] In Atharva Veda there is a particular hymn called "Hymn to the battle-drum". This hymn extols the role of the music of drum in the battle. See *Hymns of Atharva Veda*, V.v, 21; X.xii, 1. ET in M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLII., trans., M. Bloomfield, New Delhi 1973, 131-132; 204.

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divinity by certain intonations called *vratā*, *chanda*, *prabbandh*, *gita* etc. We get a description of the characteristics of this religious chanting from Bh. A. Pingle: "...this type of singing has not been what we call singing; but nearly allied to it, and, as such, is much less remote from common speech than singing is, for poetical singing is, in all respects, intermediate between speech and song. Its average effects are neither so loud nor so low as those of song. Its tones are less sonorous in timbre than those of song. Commonly it travels to a smaller extent from the middle notes, and it uses notes neither so high nor so low in pitch. Those intervals habitual to it are neither so wide nor so varied. Its rate of variation is not rapid; and, at the same time, its primary rhythm is less decided. It has none of the secondary rhythm, which is one of the marked characteristics of song; and last, but not least, its average duration of notes is neither so long nor so short as that of song."<sup>[5]</sup>

In spite of the great importance that Hindu religion attaches to music, we find strong rejection of music as a whole in some of the

ancient Hindu literature. In *Anugita*,<sup>[6]</sup> the so called part of the *Bhagavadgita*, music is condemned, as is the case in the laws of *Apastambha*, *Manu* and others.<sup>[7]</sup> This condemnation seems to be strange since according to the *Bṛihadāranyaka*, *Kaushitaki*, and *Chândogya Upanishads*, the sacredness of the Sama Veda is equal to that of other Vedas. In *Bhagavadgita* itself we hear the assertion that Krishna, the Lord, is the Sama Veda among the Vedas.<sup>[8]</sup> The condemnation may be explained as evoked by some abuses of the two arts, dance and music, which must have come into prevalence about the time of the composition of the *Anugita*.

In the history of Indian music two main periods can be observed: the *vaidika* (vedic) and the *laukika* (secular). The *sāmagāna*, together with its various forms, constitutes the fabric of the *vaidika* music, while the *gandharva* and formalised *deśi* (local) music form that of the *laukika* music.<sup>[9]</sup> Indian music acquired its present shape only in the classical period (600 B.C. - 500 B.C.). On the foundation of the base tones of the vedic music the microtones<sup>[10]</sup> were fixed.

[5] Bh.A. Pingle, *Indian Music*, (First edition, Kathiawar 1868), New Delhi 1989, 36-37.

[6] *Anugita* condemns dancing and music both instrumental and vocal. See *Anugita XXIII*, in *Bhagavadgita with the Sanatsugatiya and the Anugita*, M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. VIII., trans., K.T. Telang, New Delhi 1970, 325. *Anugita* is considered to be of the period prior to 6th cent. B.C.

[7] *Apastamba* I.1.3, 11. See English translation (ET) in M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. VIII., *The Sacred Laws of Aryas*, trans., G. Bühler, New Delhi 1969; *Manu* II.178; III. 155, 158; IX. 225; XI. 66. For ET see M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXV., *The Laws of Manu*, trans., G. Bühler, New Delhi 1970.

[8] *Bhagavadgita*, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. VIII., trans., K.T. Telang, New Delhi 1970, 88.

[9] Swami Prajnanananda, *A History of Indian Music*, Vol. I., Calcutta 1963, 11

[10] The microtones (*śrutis*) are the minute perceptible (*śhravanayogyā*) tones or musical units that constitute the structures of seven tones like *śhadjā*, *riśhabha*, *gandhārā*, *madhyamā*, *pañchamā*, *dhaivata*, and *nishāda* (corresponding vedic tones are *chaturtha*, *mandra*, *atisvarya*, *krusta*, *prathama*, *dvitiya*, *tritiya*). While speaking about the properties of sound, *Anugita* refers to the seven tones. *Anugita*, XXXV, p.385. In the universal history of music we do not come across the use of microtones in the primitive, prehistoric and vedic periods. But their existence cannot be denied even in those times, and it can be said that in those periods men did not feel it necessary to determine them in their musical systems.

The use of the microtones may properly be assigned to the beginning of the classical period (600-500 B.C.), when *sāmagāna*, the vedic music, was falling out of practice and the *laukika gandharva* type of systematic and scientific music was gaining ascendancy over it. The microtones were devised by Brahma or Brahmabharata, the first promulgator of the *gandharva* type of music, and afterwards it was made perfect by Narada, the author of *Nāradi[ś]ksha* (1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.), and by Bharata, the author of the famous *Nāṭya[ś]āstra* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.<sup>[11]</sup> When new system was innovated by Brahma, seven pure (*juddha*) *jatis* were used in songs. In the *Ramayana* we find that seven *juddha jatis* were used in *Ramayana gana*. In *Mahabharata* (300 B.C.) and the *Harivamsa* (200 B.C.) we find mention of six *grāmarāgās*.<sup>[12]</sup>

Narada has mentioned 5 basic tones - *dīpta*, *ayata*, *karuna*, *mridu* and *madhya*, and he has called them [*rutis*]. Bharata has systematically determined and arranged 22 microtones (*rutis*) on the basis of those 5 basic minute

tones, and has named them as *jātis* or the *ādharas* of the 22 microtones.<sup>[13]</sup>

## 2. Music in the Vedic Worship

### 2.1. Sacred Origin of Music

Hindu belief is that the music has a sacred origin. The universe is created by *nāda* (sound).<sup>[14]</sup> The universe is created by the *nāda* which is Brahman himself. The word *nāda* is the combination of two words *nā* and *da*. *Na* signifies the existence of life and *da* signifies *Agni* or fire.<sup>[15]</sup> *Nāda* is the basis of everything in the universe. "There is no knowledge without *nāda*. There is no music display without *Ziva*. The eternal light is *nādarūpa* and Vishnu himself is *nādarūpa*. Without *nāda* there is no music, no sound, no *rāga*, and no nature."<sup>[16]</sup>

Music is generally consecrated to the gods. The *rāgās* and *rāginis* (female *rāgās*), through which vocal and instrumental music finds its wealth of ex-pression, are presided over by different divinities.<sup>[17]</sup> The Hindu *purānās* trace the origin of music to the gods themselves.

[11] In the classical period there were four main schools (*sampradāyas*) of music, dance and drama: 1. School of Brahma or Brahmabharata and Ziva or Sada[ivab]aharata 2. School of Gandharva Narada 3. School of Muni Bharata (the author of the famous *Natya[ś]āstra*) 4. School of Nandike[vara]. In the period after the systematisation of music by Bharata (2nd cent. A.D.) we find so many eminent musicologists in the history of Indian music like Nandike[vara] (3rd-5th cent.), Kohla, the author of *Sangitameru* (before 5th-7th cent.), Dattila (contemporary or little later than Bharata), Matanga, the author of *Brihaddeśi* (5th to 7th cent.), Mashtika, Durgashakti, Vishvakhila, Visvasu, (all the four mentioned by Matanga), Svati (mentioned by Bharata), Utpaladeva, Kirtidhara (commentator of Bharata), Lollata (9th cent.), Matrigupta (607-647), Abhinavagupta (11th cent., commentator of *Natya[ś]āstra*), Mammatacharya (11th cent.), Parshadeva (Jain musicologist, the author of *Sangitasamayasa* 9th-11th cent.), King Nanyadeva (1097-1133), Some[vara] (12th cent.), and Saradatanaya (1175-1250).

[12] Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 34.

[13] Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 16-17.

[14] Cf. Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Mysticism of Music, Sound and Word*, 13. The Indian literature, both vedic, epic and classical, have described that music originated from the sound (*nāda*), which is the product of ether (*ākā[śa]*): "*Shabda ākā[śa-sambhavaḥ*". Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 14.

[15] M.S. Chakraborty, *Indian Musicology*, Calcutta 1982, 22.

[16] The song of Parashar given in S.B. Varma, *Brhat Vishvasukti Ko[ś]* (Hindi), Vol. III, New Delhi 1985, 1138.

[17] K. Mitra, "Diffusion of Socio-Religious Culture in North India", 517.



The *Trimurti*, namely Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Ziva the destroyer are the source of music.<sup>[18]</sup> They themselves are musicians. The Hindu tradition is like this that once Vishnu happened to be charmed by the vocal performance of Ziva and began to melt. The result was the sacred river Ganges. Ziva or Mahe[vara invented Pinaka, the father of stringed instruments. It was out of his five mouths that five of the original *râgâs* of Hindu music originated. The sixth *râga* sprang from the mouth of his consort Parvati. Brahma added six *râginis* to each of the principal *râgâs* and began to impart a knowledge of music to five of his disciples. Among them Hubu and Tamburu cultivated and spread the knowledge of vocal music.<sup>[19]</sup>

The faith of the divine origin of music is expressed in the close association of the temple and music. Temple was the place where not only the liturgical music, but even the secular music developed. In the South, the *vâdyappura* or *kottupura* were special buildings adjoined to the temples for the sake of performing musical concerts, especially instrumental music like *panchavadyam*. A special building called *Kootthambalam* was there for *Koothu*, a sort of musical dance.

According to the Hindus, music by its very nature is sacred. Music constitutes a symbolic reality which stands as a bridge between the profane and the sacred. Just as there are sacred space, sacred people, sacred objects, sacred time, etc., music of worship is the sacred sound, namely the sacred speech. There is no question of a mere saying or reading in the Hindu worship. The sound in worship is sacred and it has to have a form higher and nobler than the ordinary form. In worship the sound has the function of mediation between the divine and the human. As in the case of the other elements of the space-time of worship, music of worship marks a radical break from the profane sound of the cosmos. The consecration of the sound is already made by means of the fixing of a text and the fixing of its tone. Hindus insist on the style of reciting the *mantras*.<sup>[20]</sup> *Mantras* have creative power because they contain the correctly articulated sounds that created and sustains the world.<sup>[21]</sup> Insisting on the same text and same tone prescribed for a specific *mantra*, the priest presents it as the sacred symbol of divine human communication. For the Hindus, music seems to be the language of gods.

[18] Regarding the origin of music Zaivite and Vaishnavite followers have different traditions. The worshipers of Lord Ziva hold that music came out from the mouths of both Ziva and Zakti, whereas the followers of Vishnu ascribe its origin to Lakshmi and Narayana (Vishnu). Ziva and Zakti were considered as the sources of rhythm and tempo of music. In *Sangitasamayasa*, a work of 9th-11th century A.D., *nâda*, the causal sound has been defined as Brahma, Vishnu and Mahe[vara: "nadatmanastrayo deva brahma-vishnu-mahesvarah". Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 81-82.

[19] S.M. Tagore, *Universal History of Music*, New Delhi 1990, 50.

[20] *Mantra* is a prayer, a sacred formula (from the root *man*-to think), a holy word, a vedic text or verse. Usually only the *sambhita* portion of the Veda is termed *mantra*. Being a powerful word, it can also have the meaning of spell or incantation. R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramanyari. An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration*, Pondicherry 1983, 882.

[21] A. Pulickamandapathil, *Spirituality of the Religious Vows (Vratas) and Feasts (Utsavas) of the Hindus of Madhya Pradesh: An Appraisal in the Light of the Practice of Fasts and Feasts among the St. Thomas Christians*, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Pontificia Universitas A. S. Thoma Aq. In Urbe, Rome 1995, 120.

An important characteristic of the Hindu sacred music is that, it is the result of God-experience. Sacred music is the creation of the people with God-experience. Both the lyric and the tone are created together. It may be compared to the icon of the Eastern Christians. Hindu music enjoys a position similar to that of an icon in the world of painting. What really counts is not the musical talent as such, but the God-experience of the people. The music is but the symbolic expression of the God-experience. The persons who have contributed to the liturgical music of Hindus, especially in the post-vedic period, were persons who had composed music on the basis of their profound divine-experience. Consequently most of the liturgical hymns have *âtmasâkshâtâkâra* (realization of the self) and *brahmasâkshâtâkâra* (realization of God) as their themes.

## 2.2. Chanting of Mantras

The *mantras* are already consecrated prayers, which are considered so powerful that they can control the gods themselves.<sup>[22]</sup> The *mantras* accompanying the sacrificial rites are

considered to be so powerful that the sacrifice becomes efficacious due to the energy hidden in the invocations.<sup>[23]</sup> The *Zatapatha Brâhmana* makes it clear saying: "Speech leads the sacrifice to the gods."<sup>[24]</sup> There are short ones like 'Om' and 'Namah Zivâyâ' and others consisting of few lines.<sup>[25]</sup> Most of the *mantras* are recited beginning with *Om*. One of the most famous *mantras* is the *gâyatri mantra*. It is so ancient that the Vedas themselves are believed to be born of this *mantra*.<sup>[26]</sup> A devout Hindu would recite this *mantra* many times a day. According to *Agnipurana* (215.6-7), the repetition of *gâyatri* seven times would convey the person to heaven.<sup>[27]</sup> The man who knows the *gâyatri mantra* is said to win earth, heaven and the atmosphere.<sup>[28]</sup>

There are certain *mantras* which have a very special signification. They are called *b+ja-aksharâs* or radical letters; such as for instance, *bram, brim, brom, brum, braba*, etc. Hindus believe that to those who have the key to the exact recital of them and the know how of their proper use, nothing is impossible; there is no limit to the miracles they can perform.<sup>[29]</sup>

[22] This idea is very well expressed in a Sanskrit *sloka*: "*Devadbinam jagatsarvam, mantradbinam ca devata, tanmantram brahmanadbinam brahmana mama devata*" (The whole universe is subject to the gods, the gods are subject to *mantras*, the *mantras* are subject to the *Brahmanas*, *Brahmana* is my deity). See D. Acharuparambil, *Induismo: Vita e Pensiero*, Rome 1976, 36.

[23] S. Elavathingal, *Inculturation and Christian Art: An Indian Perspective*, Rome 1990, 101.

[24] *Satapatha Brahmana*, I.4.4.2. in M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XII, trans., J. Eggeling, New Delhi 1972.

[25] On the significance attached to the *mantras* in Hindu religion see J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 138-143.

[26] *Om bhur bhuvah svah tat savitur varenyam Bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.* Om! earth, sky, heaven; Om! that excellent vivifier The light divine, let us mediate upon Which (light) enlightens our understanding. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 256.

[27] J.L. Shastri, ed., *Agnipurana*, trans., N. Gangadharan, *Ancient Indian Traditions and Myths*, Vols. 27-30, New Delhi, 1984-87. Cf. A. Pulickamandapathil, *Spirituality of the Religious Vows (Vratas) and Feasts (Utsavas)*, 121.

[28] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, V.14. ET in M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XV, New Delhi 1969.

[29] Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 143.



### 2.3. Sâman Singing

The vedic music, *sâmagâna*<sup>[30]</sup> was, in fact, the source of classical music of India.<sup>[31]</sup> It was the earliest scientific method of singing in India. It became systematic when three base tones like *anudâtta*, *svarita* and *udâtta* evolved. The *svarita* was the harmonizing (*samâhâra*) or balancing middle tone that was the combination of the partial tones of the *anudâtta* and *udâtta*.<sup>[32]</sup> The vedic tones *prathama*, *dvitiya*, *tritiya*, *chaturtha*, *mandra* (*panchama*), *atī[varya]* (*[astha]*), *krusta* (*saptama*) evolved earlier in the vedic society and they are, therefore, anterior to the post-vedic *laukika* solfa syllables like *sa*, *ri*, *ga*, etc. The vedic music, *sâmagâna* used to be sung with different tones, which evolved in a gradual process from one to seven, thus creating different strata like *archika*, *gathika*, *sâmika*, *svarantara*, *audava*, *shadava* and *sâmpurna*.<sup>33[33]</sup> When Brahma or Brahmabharata developed a new system in the Indian music, he incorporated most of the materials of the vedic music.

As regards the scale of music, the *sâman* scale is the most ancient one in Indian music.<sup>[34]</sup>

It is said that the scale of *sâman* singing began with the vedic tone, *krusta*, corresponding to the *laukika* tone *panchama* of the lower octave in a downward process (*avarohana krama*).<sup>[35]</sup> At first the *sâmagânas* were sung with the basic tones like *udâtta*, *anudâtta* and *svarita*, corresponding to the *laukika* (post-vedic) tones, *nishabha*, *nishâda* and *shadja*. The fixed scale of the vedic music was *shadjagrâma*. It was of three kinds, low, medium, and high. It consisted all the *shuddharâgâs*.<sup>[36]</sup>

In the *Brahmana* literature we find references as to the method of chanting hymns with one tone only (*ekasvari-gayana*). It was also known as the *archika-gayana*. The system of chanting or singing vedic hymns with two tones, high and low, is called *gatha-gayana*. The system of chanting or singing the vedic hymns with three tones, high, medium and low, is called *sâmika gayana*. We find in the vedic hymns the use of meters (*chanda*), composed of different letters. The meters like, *gâyatri*, *jagati*, etc., have been mentioned in the vedic literature. The vedic hymns were chanted or sung with some accents, and those accents used to be observed according to the measuring units of *brasva*,

[30] The hymns of Rig Veda are used as the libretto or the *sahitya* for the melodies which are called *Samans*. V. Raghavan, "Samaveda and Music", in Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 191.

[31] Bh. A. Pingle observes: "The Sama Veda, if heard and studied as a musical piece, shows that almost all the elements of present music are to be found in their ancient forms, although not well-defined and developed." Pingle, *Indian Music*, 5, note.1. I am grateful to Prof. Dr. G.P. Mishra, the principal of the Govt. Music College, Maihar (M.P., India), for the valuable information regarding the Saman singing.

[32] Prof. Sambamoorthy says: "The Rig Veda was recited to the three notes *anudatta*, *udatta* and *svarita*, corresponding to *ri*, *ni* and *sa* of the frequencies 10/9, 8/9 and 1 respectively, the *nishada* being a note belonging to the lower octave". Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 19.

[33] Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 20.

[34] The *Saman* scale comes under the Hindustani *Kafi That* and the Karnatic *Karabarpriya-mela*. Raghavan, "Samaveda and Music", 196.

[35] The *Saman* singing as contrasted with classical Indian music, shows notes in a descending series, *avarohanakrama*. Old Greek music was also in a descending series. Raghavan, "Samaveda and Music", 197.

[36] Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 43-45.

*dirgha, pluta, guru* etc.<sup>[37]</sup> The efficacy of the *mantra*, according to Hindu belief, depended much on the perfect chanting of it.

Hindu belief is that the royal way to win over the deity is to say its praise and prayer in music.<sup>[38]</sup> In the sacrifices, therefore, there were special singers called *Udgatris* who sang the hymns of the Rig Veda.<sup>[39]</sup> When they are thus being sung, Rics, from two to seven, were strung together in the same melody, and each such group is called a *Stotra*. There was the accompaniment of *v+na*.<sup>[40]</sup> There were additional singers to assist the main *Udgâta*. The participation was systematised with each part of the singing done by a separate singer.

The chanting of the Sama Veda was sacred to the Hindus. The ancient Hindus were scrupulous about the music of their Sama Veda and religious prayers. Sama Veda was chanted while the other Vedas were only recited. It is evident from the present practice and from the testimony of authorities.<sup>[41]</sup> H.T. Colbrooke speaks about the sacred character of the Sama chanting: "A peculiar degree of holiness seems to be attached to the Sama for its chanting, and that a musical notation was invented to denote the meters and the mode

of chanting."<sup>[42]</sup> The vedic tones were fixed for the sake of ensuring the proper chanting of the *mantras* and hymns. *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* says:

Therefore, let a priest who is going to perform the sacrificial work of Sama singer, desire that his voice may have good tone, and let him perform the sacrifice with a voice that is good in tone.<sup>[43]</sup>

The same Upanishad speaks on the necessity of learning thoroughly the tone of the hymns:

"Therefore, let one who is to perform the duties of a Ritvig, desire to acquire the musical notes together with speech. By that speech which has obtained the musical notes, let him perform the rites of the Ritvig. Therefore, people are desirous to look during the sacrifice upon the sweet toned performer of Udgita as upon a rich man."<sup>[44]</sup>

The proper chanting of the hymns was a must for its fruitfulness. The pronunciation had, therefore, a very important role to play in the vedic chanting. *Chandogya Upanishad* gives clear rules concerning the pronunciation:

[37] Cf. Pingle, *Indian Music*, 5, note.1.

[38] Pingle, *Indian Music*, 38; Raghavan, "Samaveda and Music", 192.

[39] Max Müller says : "There were some parts of the sacrifice, which, according to ancient custom, had to be accompanied by songs, and hence arose another class of priests whose particular office it was to act as the chorus. This naturally took place at the most solemn sacrifices only. Though as yet we have no key as to the character of the music which the Udgatris performed, we can see from the numerous and elaborate rules, however unintelligible, that their music was more than mere chanting" Müller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, London 1860, pp. 472-473.

[40] See the discussion on sacred musical instruments.

[41] Pingle, *Indian Music*, 236.

[42] Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 1858, pp. 47-50.

[43] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, III.27.

[44] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* I.3.



All vowels are to be pronounced with voice (*ghosha*) and strength (*bala*), so that the Udgatri may give strength to Indra. All sibilants are to be pronounced, neither as if swallowed (*agrasta*) nor as if thrown out (*nirasta*), but well opened (*vivrita*) so that the Udgatri may give himself to Prajapati. All consonants are to be pronounced slowly, and without crowding them together, so that the Udgatri may withdraw himself from *Mṛityu* (death).<sup>[45]</sup>

The hymns and songs were associated with the names of God or gods.<sup>[46]</sup> Particular tones of the Sama singing are intended to please particular deities. *Chandogya Upanishad* says:

“The Udgita, of which a poet said, I choose the deep sounding note of the Saman as good for cattle, belongs to Agni; the indefinite note belongs to Prajapati; the definite note to Soma, the soft and smooth note to Vayu, the smooth and strong note to Indra, the heron-like note to Brihaspati, the dull note to Varuna. Let a man cultivate all of these, avoiding, however, that of Varuna.”<sup>[47]</sup>

According to *Chandogya Upanishad*, the Udgita of Sama is considered the cream of Sama.<sup>[48]</sup> The monosyllable *Om* which is the beginning of Udgita is attributed the capacity to provide immortality. In *Chandogya Upanishad* we read:

The Devas, being afraid of death, entered upon (the performance of the sacrifice prescribed in ) the threefold knowledge (the three Vedas). They covered themselves with the metrical hymns. Because they covered (*chad*) themselves with the hymns, therefore, the hymns are called *chandasa*. Then, as fisherman might observe a fish in the water, Death observed the Devas in the Rik, Yajus and Saman sacrifices. And the Devas seeing this, rose from the Rik, Yajus and Saman sacrifices and entered the *svara*, that is the *Om* (they meditated on the *Om*). When a man has mastered the Rig Veda, he says quite loud *Om*; the same when he has mastered the Saman and Yajus. The *savara* is the imperishable (syllable), the immortal, free from fear. Because the Devas entered it, therefore they became immortal and free from fear.<sup>[49]</sup>

Udgita with its most abridged sounds (*Om*) is a composition of musical notes combined with words. This *Om* was the essence of all the hymns, and its general acceptance may possibly be due to its shortness and simplicity. This mysterious monosyllable is the symbolic name of the Supreme Being, one and indivisible, like the word *Om*.<sup>[50]</sup> *Om* as a *b+jakshara* connotes the triune functionaries, Brahma, Vishnu, and Ziva, all the three conceived as one.<sup>[51]</sup> *Bhagavadgita* says that Brahman is the one-syllabled *Om* (*Gita* 8.13).

[45] *Chandogya Upanishad* (CU) II. 22,5. ET in M. Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I, New Delhi 1969.

[46] *Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad* VII. ET in M. Müller, *Sacred Books of the East, Upanishads*, Vol.XV., New Delhi 1969, 338-340.

[47] CU II. 22,1.

[48] CU I. 1,2.

[49] CU I. 4, 2-4. Cf. also CU II. 22,2.

[50] Pingle, *Indian Music*, 258; DUBOIS, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 141.

[51] L.A. Ravi Varma, “Rituals of Worship”, in H. Bhattacharyya, ed., *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, Calcutta 1983, pp.446. Cf. Swami Swahananda, *Hindu Symbology and Other Essays*, Madras 1987, 12.

The greatness of *Om* may be clear from the *Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad*: "Other teachers of the word, *Om*, (as Brahman) think otherwise. They listen to the sound of the ether within the heart while they stop the ears with the thumbs. They compare it to seven noises, like rivers, like a bell, like a brazen vessel, like the wheels of a carriage, like the croaking of frogs, like rain, and as if a man speaks in a cavern. Having passed beyond this variously apprehended sound, and having settled in the supreme, soundless (non-word), unmanifested Brahman, they become undistinguished and indistinguishable, as various flavours of the flowers are lost in the taste of honey."<sup>[52]</sup>

### 3. Music in the Post-Vedic Worship

In the post-vedic history of Hindu worship the vedic rites lost the prominence which they once enjoyed. They are almost non-existent today except for a few *grihya* (domestic) ones, such as *sandhyāvandana*, marriage etc. True forms of vedic worship such as *yagas* and *sattras* are very rare today. Of the vedic forms of worship, the *somayāga* and the *agnistoma* appear to be the only surviving forms. The *āgamic* type of worship has taken the place of many of the vedic forms.<sup>[53]</sup> *Japa*<sup>[54]</sup> has an important place in the

*agama*<sup>[55]</sup> worship. *Japa* consists of repeating the names (*nāma-japa*) or the *mula mantras* (*mantra-japa*) of the deity. Mere repeating of the name of the deity is the simplest example of *nāma-japa*. Examples for *mantra japa* are '*Om namo Nārāyanaya*' (for Vishnu), '*Om namah Zivāya*' (for Ziva).<sup>[56]</sup> *Japa* is the best example of private worship: no image is required here, not even a light is essential.

*Mantras* and *bhajans* constitute the essential part of the Hindu liturgical music. *Mantras* are mostly recited by the priests, whereas the *bhajans* are sung by the laity as well. With regard to the temple worship the role of the laity is rather passive. The real puja is administered by the priest. It is up to the priests to sing the *mantras* during the *puja*. The *mantras* accompany the cultic gestures of the priests. Some priests keep these *mantras* so sacred and would not allow the profane people hear and understand it. There was a time when the low caste people were forbidden to hear the sacred chanting of Vedas. Such a sacredness is not attributed to the *mantras* everywhere in India. Especially with regard to the domestic pujas and sacrifices, the people may participate in the recital of *mantras*. Normally it is up to the priest to sing the *mantras*. However, the members of the congregation capable of

[52] *Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad* VI. 22.ET in M.Müller, ed, *Sacred Books of the East, Upanishads* II, Vol. XV, New Delhi 1969, 321. *Om* is said to contain all Vedas. Cf. *Katha Upanishad* I. 2, 15-17; *Prasna Upanishad* 5:5; *Mandokya Upanishad* I;1. For the ET of these *Upanishads* see M. Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I & XV, New Delhi 1969.

[53] L.A. Ravi Varma, "Rituals of Worship", 446-447.

[54] *Japa* is silent or muttered repetition of sacred formulae (*mantras*) or of the names of gods, as a spiritual exercise. The prayer is usually performed with the help of a rosary (*mālā*).

[55] The term *āgama* literally means 'that which has come from'. In fact, the real source of *āgama* is vedic rites themselves. We can also find influence of the philosophy of yoga in this form of worship.

[56] For the *mantras* that are chanted on the important occasions in the life of the individuals, see Swami Paramesvarananda, *Shodasa samskarangal*, Thiruvananthapuram 1994.



singing with may join. Since the *mantras* are chanted in Sanskrit, the sacred language of Vedas, the ordinary people find it difficult to sing with. In most cases those who are able to sing with the priest may be members of the priestly caste.<sup>[57]</sup>

*Bhajans* are typical Hindu liturgical songs which have a more congregational character than the *mantras*. The recital of the *bhajan* is normally done by the lay faithful individually or in congregation. In case of congregational singing, the leader sings and the people repeat. It is not an essential part of the formal worship of the temple like *puja* and *yajna*. It is sometimes called *kirttanam* or *nâmajapa*. *Bhajans* are characterised by their feature of having only few words. The same refrain is repeated for any amount of time. Repetition of a simple and short song may be considered the hallmark of a *bhajan*.<sup>[58]</sup> The *bhajan* makes us pass into the world of the sacred. Swami Mridananda of the Ramakrishna Math says that *bhajan* is a prayer of intense devotion (intense love of God).<sup>[59]</sup> The tone and the rhythm remain the same. However, the volume of singing is gradually decreased and there comes a point when we sing without sound. The singer is gradually pushed into the world where there is no sound. He passes from the music of the space-time into the music of the non-space-time.

*Bhajans* have become more popular due to the attempts of certain poets who were people with intense God-experience. The translation of the classical religious hymns into the vernaculars was the main reason for the popularity of *bhajans*. *Bhajan* singing became an imperative for an orthodox Hindu. There took place spiritual renewal after the 15<sup>th</sup> century due to the spiritual hymns contributed by the great devotees like Kabirdas, Haradasa, Ramadasa, Suradasa, Tulasidas, Meerabhai, Tanasena, Thunchathu Ezhutthachan, Poonthanam etc. These spiritual poets extolled the greatness of praising God through the *nâmajapa*. Poonthanam, a Malayalam poet of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, has exhorted in *Ānappâna*, a work of spiritual hymns, that the *nâmajapa* alone is sufficient to ensure the *moksha* (eternal bliss).<sup>[60]</sup>

In modern period we find sets of hymns both classical and new ones arranged for the religious devotion of believers. Thus there is a great variety of the *stotra* (praise) literature. The hymnology has diverse forms such as the *nuti*, *stuti*, *smriti*, *raksha*, *varman*, and *kavacha*.<sup>[61]</sup> The chanting of the devotional hymns has become an essential element of the domestic worship of the Hindus. *Saundarya lahari*, *Harinâmakirttanam*, *Adhyâtma Râmâyana*, *Ānappâna*, *Bhâgavatam* etc. are examples for the modern hymns.<sup>[62]</sup>

[57] According to B.R. Gautam, a priest and the Sanskrit teacher of Christ Jyothi School, Satna, M.P., the reservation of the chanting to the priest is just due to the practical situation. Personally he does not feel that the chant is something 'untouchable' to the non-priestly people.

[58] On the cultic significance of *bhajan* see M. Amaladoss, "Initiation to Bhajan", in D.S. Amalorpavadass, ed., *Praying Seminar*, NBCLC, Bangalore 1976, 279-284.

[59] *Bhajanavali: A Book of Hymns and Songs* (Malayalam), Ramakrishna Math, Trichur 1996, 3.

[60] *Bhajanavali*, 197-198.

[61] S. Bhattacharya, "Indian Hymnology", in H. Bhattacharyya, ed., *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV: *The Religions*, Calcutta 1983, 466.

[62] The *Bhajanavali* (19th edition, 1996) published by the Ramakrishna Math, Puranattukara, Trichur in Kerala is a carefully made collection of the devotional hymns that the Hindus of Kerala have been singing in their homes for centuries.

### 3.1. Bhajans in the Temple

In the temple worship we find numerous types of singing. First of all there is the chanting of the *mantras*. The *bhajans* are sung with the participation of the faithful, especially for certain prayer meetings. There are musicians who sing hymns in honour of the gods. Sometimes the Brahmins and other worshippers form the chorus, or sing separately sacred poems of their own composition. Dance and music accompanied the rite of bringing water solemnly into the temple for the ritual washing of the statue of the deity. The *Devadāsīs* (maid-servants of the gods) used to dance and sing twice a day, morning and evening, and also at all public ceremonies. The players of the musical instruments were obliged to attend the temple twice a day and play their instruments. They had to be present at all feasts and ceremonies.

### 3.2. Bhajans in Domestic Worship

Though the formal Hindu worship is centered on the temple, the domestic worship also plays an important role in the religious life of the Hindus. Very often it substitutes the temple worship. In some cases the temple becomes attached to the house. In South India the Hindu families of high caste had their own domestic temples.

An ordinary Brahmin has to recite prayers to numerous deities number of times from the very moment of rising till he goes to bed. Especially at the morning, noon and evening *sandhyas* (twilight).<sup>[63]</sup> When he wakes up he has to make *hari-smarana* (remembrance of Vishnu), reciting aloud the litanies to Vishnu, and repeating his thousand names.<sup>[64]</sup> Such repetitions of the names of the gods a thousand times in a long hymn is a special devotion still prevalent among the Hindus.<sup>[65]</sup>

### 4. Musical Instruments in Worship

Of the Indian musical instruments, *vena* and *mridanga* are the most ancient ones. In the *Sambhitas* like Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda, and in different *Brahmanas*, there are references to crude forms of drums, known as *bhumi- Dundubhi*, *Dundubhi*, *panava*, *karkari* etc. The *bhumi- Dundubhi* was perhaps the most ancient and primitive form of drum. Atharva Veda underlines the significance of drum in the 'Hymn to the Battle-Drum'.<sup>[66]</sup> *Zathapatha Brahmana* points out the cultic significance of the music of drums. "They put seventeen drums along the edge of the altar, from the *Agnidbra* backwards (towards the West)".<sup>[67]</sup> Prajapati is the supreme speech, the outcome of seventeen drums.<sup>[68]</sup>

[63] *Sandhya* literally means the meeting between day and night. For a description of these prayers see Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 236-269.

[64] The *hari-smarana* consists in saying for example: "Hail Govinda, Hail Kesava, Hail Narayana, Hail Hari..." Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 237. Concerning the Brahmins in Kerala, Kanippayoor Sankaran Namboothirippadu says that immediately after getting up the Brahmin has to sing the *mangalaparthana* facing the East. K. Sankaran Namboothirippadu, *Nityakarmam* (Malayalam), Panchangam Press, Kunnamkulam 1996, 1-2.

[65] *Vishnusahasranamastotram*, *Zivasahasranamastotram* are examples for this. For the text of these see *Bhajanavali*, 198-207; 219-231. Cf. K. Mitra, "Diffusion of Socio-Religious Culture in North India", 516.

[66] *Hymns of Atharva Veda*, V.v. 21. Cf. also AV III.v. 31; V.vi.38; X.xii.1.

[67] *Zathapatha Brahmana* (SB), III, I.5,6 in M. Müller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLI, trans., J. Eggeling, New Delhi 1972.

[68] SB III, I.5,6.



Even the supreme God himself makes use of the music of drum in liturgy. "One of these drums he (the Brahman) beats (while praying) with a sacrificial formula: thereby all of them become beaten with a sacrificial formula."<sup>[69]</sup>

The *v+na* was a very sacred musical instrument in ancient times, and it was the forerunner of all kinds of string instruments of later ages. *Chandogya Upanishad* speaks about the use of *v+na* in the liturgical singing.<sup>[70]</sup> In the vedic period, the *v+na* was used as instrumental support in songs and dances during the sacred sacrifices. The *audumbari-v+na* was made of *udamvara* wood and it used to be played by the wives of the *samagas* during the *sâmagânâs*, before the sacrificing altars. The *picchora* or *picchola v+na* was played by the wives of the sacrificial priests during the sacrifices. In the vedic period there were different *v+nas* like *vanaspati*, *vana*, *audumvari*, *kshoni*, *picchora* or *picchola*, etc. The *vana v+na* had hundred strings, made of *munja* grass or entrails of the animals. There are references to the *vana v+na* in Rig Veda. During the *Brahmana* and *Kalpasutra* periods we hear about *katyayani v+na*, modelled after the vedic *vana v+na*. Archaeological research in the Indus valley has shown that the musical instruments mentioned by the Vedas were prevalent in the Indus valley civilization. From the excavation of Rupur, a representation of a *v+na* with four

strings has been unearthed. The crude forms of flutes and drums have also been excavated from the Indus valley mounds.<sup>[71]</sup>

There are musical instruments associated with gods. Krishna is associated with flute, *murali (venu)*; Sarasvati is associated with *v+na*. The music of *Zankhu* has become an essential factor of the temple rites.<sup>[72]</sup> The drums have a special place in the Hindu worship. Especially during the festivals, the drums are very important. They have different forms in the different parts of India. In Kerala, South India, it is called *chenda*. In Tamil Nadu, *mridanga* does the function of the Keralite *chenda*. Among the *adivasis* (tribal people) the *mandar* is the important drum. In the states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan *dholak* is the form of drum. The music of drums and *sankhu* accompanies the rite of awakening the deity in the temple.

The concert of the musical instruments called *panchavâdyâ* has a significant place in the Hindu worship, especially that of the festivals. *Nâgasvara* is likewise an important instrumental music. The *sopâna sangeetham* with the accompaniment of *idacka* is important in the temple worship.

## 5. Influence of Hindu Music on the Christian Liturgical Music in India

In spite of the different faiths, the Hindus and Christians formed a single Indian society

[69] SB III, I.5,7.

[70] CU I. 8,6.

[71] Prajnanananda, *History of Indian Music*, 56-59.

[72] *Zankhu* is a shell from the sea, blowing which produces high voice. *Anugita* speaks about Krishna and Arjuna blowing their heavenly conchs (a sort of *sankhu*). *Anugita*, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. VIII., 38. *Srimad Bhagavatu Mahapuranam* speaks of Krishna's association with *sankhu*: "Having come to the greenland of Dvaraka, he blew on his conch to appraise the people there of his arrival. As he held the white conch in his rosy hands against his coral lips, it shone like a white swan amidst pink lotuses." Cited in B.C. Deva, *Musical Instruments*, New Delhi 1977,59.

which had a common culture. In many respects of social life, the Thomas Christians shared the same customs with the Hindus.<sup>[73]</sup> As regards the music, there are scholars who find considerable similarity between the folk music of the ancient Dravidian people and the folk music of the Thomas Christians. St. Thomas Christians of India were having a liturgy of the East Syriac tradition. Hence their liturgical music was having predominantly a Syriac style. However, the Syriac liturgical music was having many of the features of the Hindu music. The simplicity of style which had a great appeal for the ordinary people, was a common feature in both Syriac and Hindu music. Repetition of certain appealing verses was another common feature of the Syriac and Hindu music. Music was so prominent in the Syriac liturgy that almost all prayers during the celebration were chanted. In the Syriac liturgy mere reading was unheard; solemn celebrations meant singing the whole text. The Hindu practice has been similar. We could hardly find a Hindu priest reading out prayers or Scriptures.

The musical instruments of Hindu and Christian festivals were the same.<sup>[74]</sup> *Chendamçlam* is thus an inevitable element of the Thomas Christian feast. *Chenda*, *idacka* etc., accompany some of the religious functions too. The music of *chenda* seems to be inevitable during the flag-hoisting which marks the official beginning of the feast, and during the festal processions.

With the introduction of the vernacular liturgies liturgical music had a greater influence from the regional music. There was a trend to indianize the Christian liturgical music. As a result Hindu musical forms of *mantras* and *bhajans* were introduced in the Christian liturgy. We find an influx of Christian *bhajans* and *mantras*. They became popular especially through the small prayer groups.<sup>[75]</sup> *Mantras* were not as popular as the *bhajans* among the ordinary faithful, due to the lack of knowledge of Sanskrit. The evident hesitation of the sounds and symbols which are typically Hindu prevented the Christian *mantras* from becoming popular. For example, 'Om', a term characteristic of the vedic *mantras*, did not have appeal to a good number of Christian faithful.<sup>[76]</sup>

[73] On the cultural elements which the Thomas Christians shared with the Hindus see A. Cherukarakunnel, "The Hindu Christians of India", in J. Vellian, ed., *The Malabar Church: Symposium in Honour of Rev. Placid J. Podipara C.M.I.*, OCA 186, Rome 1970, 202-208; C.K. Pullapilly, "Hindu Symbols in the Syro-Malabar Liturgy and Devotions", *One Church* 25 (1971) 71-74; 124-130; P. Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth: The Theology of Liturgical Spacetime in the East Syrian Qurbana*, Rome 1995, 140-146.

[74] For musical performance, just like the Hindus, the St. Thomas Christians also had *vâdyappura* or *kottupura* adjoined to many of their church buildings. P. Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth*, 145.

[75] Fr. M. Amaladoss observes that the Indian Christians have not succeeded in making the *bhajans* as a means of the Christian *sadhana* because of the fear to abandon the verbal ex-pression, and because of the little time that is given to the *bhajans* as only a part in prayer service or liturgy. M. Amaladoss, *Becoming Indian: The Process of Inculturation*, Rome & Bangalore, 1992, 62. See the articles of Amaladoss on *nâmajapa* and *bhajan* in the context of inculturation: "Initiation to Bhajan", 279-284; "Initiation to Namajapa", 285-296, in D.S. Amalaorpavadass, ed., *Praying Seminar*, NBCLC, Bangalore 1976.

[76] The Congregation for the Oriental Churches, in an instruction to the bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church (12th Aug. 1980) says: "the *Om*, according to what innumerable passages of the Upanishads continually and repeatedly affirm is the synthesis of all the Vedas and of all the 'gnosis' of Hinduism. Notwithstanding the attempts made in various quarters to offer an accommodated Christian interpretation, it remains so strongly qualified in a Hindu sense, is charged with the meanings unmistakably Hindu, that it simply cannot be used



The Syro-Malabar Church with its liturgical renewal has started the work of the renewal of liturgical music. There are different sets of tunes sanctioned: simple Syriac tune, tune more faithful to the Indian music style and contemporary tunes influenced by both Indian and Western trends. The *bhajan* style is not yet given a due place. In the Malankara tradition there is a strong influence of the Syriac liturgical music. However, influence of the Hindu music of worship on the Malankara liturgical music is not decisive. The Hindi version of the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Qurbana in the North have taken into consideration the North Indian (Hindustani) music. Some of the psalms and prayers in the Qurbana are recited like Hindu hymns.

Latin Church in India has been greatly influenced by the contemporary trends in the music. In the north, the indianized version of the Latin liturgy has given a prominent place to *bhajans*.<sup>[77]</sup> The liturgical music of the Reformed Churches, especially in the North-East India, is still predominantly Western, except for the use of some local musical instruments.

Different liturgical traditions have to introduce the local musical styles into the proper setting of their own liturgies. Very often experiments are made in unauthorized

liturgies. The text should be necessarily Christian, but the style of music, instruments, and the spirit of the musical presentation can be Indian. While striving for an indigenous music in liturgy one faces the question whether the St. Thomas Christians should discard their Syriac music which has persisted in India for almost 17 centuries, and turn to the so called Hindu music style.

### Conclusion

Music, according to the Hindus, has a divine origin. It is the sacred speech of the worship. Music plays a great role in all forms of Hindu worship. In the vedic period the liturgical music was practically the recital of *mantras*. The *bhajans*, too, got a prominent place in the liturgical music in the post-vedic period. Today, the Hindus stress much the congregational character of worship, and therefore, the congregational singing of *bhajans* is becoming more and more popular.

The vedic music has provided us with a remarkable model for the liturgical music. Music is an essential element of the sacrifice. Any person aiming at a perfect sacrifice has to be keen on the perfection of the chanting of the prayers. The prescribed manner of chanting is a must for the efficacy of the sacrifice. It was for the sake of a perfect chanting that musical notes were discovered. Thus the musical quality was counted as an

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in Christian worship. "Om" is not a revealed name of God." *"A Communication to the Syro-Malabar Bishops from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches"*, 12 August 1980. Cf. A.D. Mattam, *Inculturation of the Liturgy in the Indian Context*, Kottayam 1991, 123-126.

[77] There are many priests and sisters committed to bring out meaningful *bhajans*. Fr. George Proksch SVD, Fr. Charles Vas SVD; Fr. Mahipal Bhuria, Sr. Pushpanjali S.Sp.S and Fr. Mathew Nadackal are examples for such persons. There are musical centres which champion the cause of producing liturgical music inspired by the Hindu sacred music. Ravibharati, Patna; Sangeet Abhinay Academy, Bombay; Navasadhana, Varanasi; Navachethana, Bhopal; Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra, Indore; Caravas, Jabalpur; Amritvani, Hyderabad are examples for such centres.

essential factor contributing to the perfection of worship.

The *bhajan* tradition of the music of Hindu worship, too, enriches our ideas concerning liturgical music. The *bhajans* try to bind music and life together. Thus we find music as the promoter of authentic spirituality. The spiritual revival in India as a whole after the 15<sup>th</sup> century was mainly due to the spiritual hymns of saintly people. The *bhajans* like *nāmajapa* are so extolled by the Hindu *Gurus*, that they are hailed to be means of liberation from sin and means to heaven. The tradition of *bhajans* tells us clearly that the liturgical musicians should be persons with true experience of God.

Even though the musical instruments of Hindus had a significant role to play in the festivals of the early Christians of India, we do not find a concrete influence of the Hindu liturgical music on them. However, in recent times the different Churches in India try to assimilate the musical heritage of Hindu worship. The *bhajan* tradition of Hindus seems to have somehow attracted the Christians of India. However, the real spirit of the *bhajan* tradition is not yet found in the liturgical music of the Indian Christians. The modern trends in the Indian music, combining the East and the West, seem to have discouraged the *bhajan* style in the liturgical music. Today's Christian liturgical music is far from the ideal one. The Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI speaks about the essential characteristic of music in liturgy: "As an element of the liturgy, song should be well integrated into the overall celebration. Consequently everything – texts,

music, execution – ought to correspond to the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, the structure of the rite and the liturgical seasons."<sup>[78]</sup> The present day liturgical music, especially that of the solemn celebrations on important days, is often a show of the musical talents of one or two individuals, having no authentic concern towards the characteristics of liturgical music. The *Musicam Sacram*, the Instruction on Music in the Liturgy says strongly against the practice of just a few talented people monopolising the liturgical music: "But the usage of entrusting to the choir alone the entire singing of the whole Proper and of the whole Ordinary, to the complete exclusion of the people's participation in the singing, is to be deprecated."<sup>[79]</sup>

For the oriental Churches in India neither the Syriac music tradition nor the Hindu music tradition seems to play a decisive role today. Nowadays liturgical music is becoming more and more a performance in line with the secular commercial music. The use of modern electronic media and powerful sound systems has indeed enhanced the quality of the performance of music in the church, but for the sake of this artistic excellence the true principles of liturgical music are sacrificed. The lessons from Hindu music of worship are indeed a true source of inspiration for the renewal of the Christian liturgical music.



[78] Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 2007, 42.

[79] *Musicam Sacram: Instruction on Music in the Liturgy*, 1967, n.16.c.15 Hindu Perspective of Sacred Music



# THEMES OF INCARNATION IN THE SEDRE FOR THE PERIOD OF SUBORO- YALDO ACCORDING TO MOSUL FENQITHO

Dr Stephen Plathottathil OIC

The Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries produced a three-way division among the Christian Churches. These divisions were originally caused by controversy over how to describe in the best way the relationship between the divinity and the humanity in the incarnate logos. For the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches, the matter had been settled by the careful doctrinal formulation produced by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. However, the use of two particular specific technical terms used in the Chalcedonian formula, ("nature" (physis) and "hypostasis") caused problems. Basically, this was because these two terms had different meanings for different people, and there were many people, both in the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, and in the Persian Empire, who understood the terms in a way that was different from that intended by the Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon. As a result of this difference in meaning given to these two terms, verbal conflicts arose and this led to misunderstandings whenever they were employed. Thus three main formulations were (and still are) to be found:

(1) Two natures in the incarnate Christ, but one hypostasis: Council of Chalcedon (present

day Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Reformed Churches);

(2) One incarnate nature of God the Word, and one hypostasis (*qnumo* in Syriac):opponents of the Council (present day Oriental Orthodox);

(3) Two natures in the incarnate Christ, with their two *qnome*: Church in the Persian Empire (present day Church of the East).

Useful neutral designations of these three positions are "dyophysite" for the first and third, and "miaphysite" for the second (which is the position of the Oriental Orthodox Churches today).

This situation was effectively made permanent by the Arab invasions of the seventh century, at the time of the birth of Islam, when the Churches of the Middle East were politically cut off from those of the Byzantine Empire and the West. Since the latter were all entirely Chalcedonian, whereas the former, all under Arab rule, were largely non-Chalcedonian.

Subsequent divisions among the non-Chalcedonian Churches arose from the sixteenth century onwards, with the creation

of the various Eastern Rite Catholic Churches (of which the Chaldean is the earliest).

When we analyse *sedre* for the *Suboro-Yaldo* period, it is clear that the main reason for all these divisions was merely terminological misunderstandings.

### What is Fenqitho?

The Fenqitho which can be described as the Sunday and Festal Hymnary of the West Syriac liturgical tradition, comes in a number of different forms. There are three printed editions, all considerably different in their contents: a large one-volume edition of the Maronite Fenqitho was printed in Rome in 1656, and this remains the only full printed edition for the Maronite liturgical tradition. At the end of the nineteenth century the great Syrian Catholic scholar, Mar Klemens Joseph David (1829-1890), edited a seven-volume edition of the Syrian Orthodox tradition adapted for Syrian Catholic use, published by the Dominican Press in Mosul over the years 1886-1896. In India a Syrian Orthodox edition was published by the Mar Julius Press at Pampakuda in three volumes (1962-3), edited by Father Abraham Konat.

The word Fenqitho is derived from the Greek *pinakidion*, 'little volume'<sup>[1]</sup>. In earliest Syriac usage *fenqitho* simply had the sense of 'volume', and it was only in the early years of the second millennium AD that it came to have its specialised sense as a specific liturgical book, the volume par excellence. The earliest manuscripts containing similar collections of materials are usually just given the title Hudro, or 'Cycle', that is, of liturgical services

throughout the year according to both the movable and the fixed cycle: these earliest manuscripts date from near the end of the first millennium AD. Before long we find a combined title being used, 'the Hudro, or Fēnqitho', and eventually it was the latter title that took over entirely.

### Two Editions in the Syrian Churches

Two editions of the Fenqitho of the West Syrian Churches (Mosul edition and Pampakuda edition) have exactly the same outlines. Both editions share the same basic structure: first come the Sundays of the liturgical year, beginning with *Suboro*, or the period of the Annunciation, and continuing through the year to Pentecost. Incorporated within this part are the fixed dominical feasts, the Nativity, Epiphany and Presentation in the Temple. Following this first part, which ends with Pentecost, come the commemorations of saints in the fixed calendar, and it is here that there is a great deal of variation in the number of commemorations that are included.

While the structure remains more or less the same, the contents are often very different. This applies in the first place to what specific items are included: thus the Mosul Fenqitho includes the long prose prayers consisting of *proimia*, *sedre* and *e#tre*, whereas these are absent from the Pampakuda edition. In this respect the Pampakuda edition represents the manuscript tradition more closely, since these prose prayers, collectively known as *busoye*, are usually transmitted in separate manuscripts. Another important difference concerning

[1] Cf. SMITH J.P, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, (Oxford, 1990), p.451.



content lies in the choice of verse texts such as *qole*, *madroše*, *sugyotho* etc: when comparing the Mosul and Pampakuda Fenqithos for any particular Sunday or Feast day, one can find that there is very little overlap in the texts chosen. The reason for this lies in the fact that there must have been an enormous repertory of verse texts to choose from, and no two compilers of Fenqitho manuscripts (or editions) ever made the same selection. This means that there is still an enormous wealth of liturgical poetry awaiting to be recovered from manuscripts.

The Fenqitho is a wonderful resource for gaining insight into all sorts of aspects of the Syriac theological tradition. One of the aims of this article is to open up the riches of this early Syriac theological and liturgical tradition for the benefit of the Syrian Churches today since it has hardly been studied at all.

### Use of Fenqitho in the Syrian Churches

The Syrian Churches have been using Fenqithos of the yearly Cycle from the very early Middle Ages<sup>[2]</sup>. The prayers, various hymns, and supplications for Sundays and feast days are contained in it. The Fenqitho is a wonderful source of the theology of the Syrian Church, which is displayed here<sup>[3]</sup>. It has magnificent offices for all the great festivals of the Christian year, beginning (at the end of October or the beginning of November)<sup>[4]</sup> with the festival of the consecration of the Church.

The liturgical year begins with the festival of the consecration of the church (Qudoš edto), in which the theology of the Church, as the bride of Christ, is unfolded. Then it passes through the season of *Suboro* or Annunciation, which prepares for the feast of Christmas. In the feast of Epiphany, the theology of the incarnation is expressed, with marvellous insight.

The seasons of Lent (the Great Fast) and Passion week, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, reveal the central mystery of Christ, with a depth of feeling and understanding. The Fenqitho helps us to experience the true meaning of the celebration of the Church's prayer throughout the liturgical year.

In the most poetic and elevating manner, the hymns, especially those of St. Ephrem and Jacob of Sarug, illustrate the revelation of New Testament, by using the inspired thought patterns of the Old Testament, and relating simple events of the past as prefigurations, types, symbols, and mysteries to the realities of the New Testament. It has been rightly observed that the Syrian liturgical tradition remarkably witnesses to the unity of the two Testaments, as the two constituent parts of the divine revelation of God's economy of salvation.

In Syriac tradition, there were different manuscript traditions and these traditions usually related to a particular Metropolis

[2] Brit.Lib. Add. 14,516. Ref. WRIGHT, Catalogue I, p.245; Brit.Lib. Add. 14,511. Ref. WRIGHT, Catalogue I, p.249; Brit. Lib. Add 14719. Ref. WRIGHT, Catalogue I, p.275; Brit. Lib. Add 17190. Ref. WRIGHT, Catalogue I, p.243.

[3] The Book of Common Prayer of the Syrian Church, (tr.) BEDE GRIFFITHS, (Kurishumala Ashram, 1976), p. xiii.

[4] This is the beginning of the liturgical year in the West Syrian Churches.

Church or to an important monastery. The copyists of manuscripts in these traditions were proud of their own typical melodies and other features, which had their own place within the greater tradition. Because of this one can observe many variations between the manuscripts of the yearly cycle, with no two manuscripts in complete agreement.

### Modern Studies of the Fenqitho

A serious study on Fenqitho as a whole is still not yet done. But there are many articles on particular areas by different liturgical scholars. A series of articles by Mateos J.<sup>[5]</sup> are of particular value to the studies of Fenqitho. His studies of collections of prayers, including *proimnia* and *sedre* in the early manuscripts are of special importance. His study of the manuscripts helps us to learn the importance and the place of the manuscript traditions behind the edition of the Mosul Fenqitho.

The contribution of Thekeparampil on the *sedre*<sup>[6]</sup> is another valuable study of relevance, being concerned with the *sedre* which are important prose prayers in the Mosul Fenqitho.

A considerable number of stanzas of *madroshe* attributed to Ephrem have been identified by Gribomont J.<sup>[7]</sup> in the Mosul Fenqitho (vols IV-V) as belonging to his Paschal hymns.

Brock has indicated the handling of the genuine *madroshe* by Ephrem in the Mosul Fenqitho<sup>[8]</sup>. In one of his unpublished articles 'The Fenqitho: A Source for Theologizing in the Syrian Church: The Present State of Study' he provides a source for an introductory study of Fenqitho.

There are many *bote d-hasbo* 'stanzas of the Passion' during the Passion Week liturgical prayers. A brief general study of these, accompanied by an edition based on the manuscripts of 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century in the Berlin collection of Syriac manuscripts has been made by W. Strothmann in his *Syrische Passionlieder*<sup>[9]</sup>.

Cody in his article entitled "The early history of the Oktoechos in Syria"<sup>[10]</sup> pointed out the indications of the musical tones in certain early Syriac liturgical traditions.

Sanders in his article "The Beth Gazo or the Octo-Echos of the West Syrian Church"<sup>[11]</sup> has defined different musical terminologies, which are used in the Mosul Fenqitho.

Khoury-Sarkis has written a quite number of articles describing specific liturgical feasts to be found in the Fenqitho in the periodical *L'Orient Syrien* (1956-67).

[5] Published in OCP 28 (1962), 33(1967), & 34 (1968).

[6] THEKEPARAMPIL J., *Sedre and Rite of Incense in the West Syrian Liturgy*, Doctoral dissertation in Paris of 1976.

[7] GRIBOMONT J., « La tradition liturgique des hymnes pascales de s.Ephrem », *Parole de l'Orient* 4 (1973), pp.191-246.

[8] BROCK S., "The transmission of Ephrem's *madroshe* in the Syriac liturgical tradition" in *Studia Patristica* 33(1997), pp.490-505.

[9] Göttinger Orientforschungen, Reihe Syriaca 32; (Wiesbaden, 1989).

[10] CODY A., in Garsoian N, Mathews T and Thomson R.W.(eds), *East of Byzantium* (Washington C, 1982), pp.89-144.

[11] SANDERS J., in *The Harp* 5, (1992),pp.15-28.



## Adaptations of Mar Klimis in the Mosul Fenqitho

In the late nineteenth century Mar Klimis introduced a number of Latin elements in the Mosul Fenqitho. These mainly apply to Western Feasts, such as Corpus Christi, which have been introduced. For these feasts he has introduced *sedre* based on works by Greek and Latin writers such as Gregory of Nazianzen, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, etc. But this does not detract from its traditional originality. The basic structure of the two Fenqitho editions is the same; only its contents vary according to the different manuscript traditions.

## Contributions of Francis Acharya

Though there is a partial adapted translation to the Mosul Fenqitho by Fr. Francis Acharya<sup>[12]</sup>, it is important to have translations of the original sources in the context of the academic work, and for liturgical renewal. The contributions of Francis Acharya to the West Syrian liturgy are very remarkable, thanks to his translations of the evening and night prayers of the Mosul Fenqitho and his adaptation of them to the Indian context involving various changes, omissions and supplementations.

## Incarnation in the *Sedre* according to the Mosul Fenqitho

In *sedre*<sup>[13]</sup> the meditation on the mysteries of faith is provided in the form of profound

theology. The Christology of the Church is expressed with lucid explanations. *Sedre* proclaim the unending divine mercy<sup>[14]</sup>. Though *sedre* prayers are addressed to 'Christ', the quality of the three persons in the Trinity is equally expressed.

*Sedre* for *Suboro-Yaldo* in the Mosul Fenqitho with those in early manuscripts of Fenqitho especially Brit.Lib.Ms Add 14518, Add.14494, Add.14521, Add.14493, Add.17128, Add.14495, Add.17271 and Add.17272 provide different manuscript traditions. This makes it more clear that there is not much variation between these two different Fenqitho sources.

Substantially most of the *sedre* show no great differences. Alterations which are chalcedonian, made by Mar Klimis, are not many, and are inoffensive. An obvious example to his alterations can be seen in the *sedro* for *Yaldo*, *Liho* 1<sup>st</sup> *qumo*, and Add.17128 (75a-b) of 10<sup>th</sup> / 11<sup>th</sup> century) which shows what the basic difference between the stands of the two Churches is.

*wadnabat wnpaqt meneh byaldo. Aaloho mšamlyo wbar anošo mšamlyo batren kyoneen whad qumo* (=You shone out and came forth from her in birth, as perfect God and perfect man in two natures and one hypostasis).

Add.17128

*wnpaqt meneh Aaloho mšamlyo wbarnošo*

[12] ACHARYA F, Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit, Vol. 1-3.

[13] The Syriac word 'Sedro' means 'order' or 'series' or 'orderly arrangement'. In the cultic context it means to arrange things in a particular order. In Leviticus the term Sedro appears six times in the sense of law and order. In the West Syriac liturgy, the Sedre denote long prose prayers, recited by the priest while putting incense in the thurible. These prayers manifest an order or series. Textually these prayers, the contents of which are set in some kind of order, deserve the name of Sedro, a term known already in the Jewish liturgy.

[14] THEKEPARAMPIL J., *Sedre and Rite of Incense in the West Syrian Liturgy*, Doctoral dissertation in Paris of 1976.

*mšambyo law kad etyad't tren aw batren elo men tren kyone dalbad rabet, Aalobo ger haw deštqal walyoledtok btulto šawzebt* (=You came forth from her as perfect God and perfect man; while You were not known as two or in two but rather Your two natures concur into one. For God is the one who takes and is taken. You preserved Your virgin mother)

These quotations in the *sedre* agree that Jesus has two natures. The difference is only that Manuscript states that 'two natures concur into one'. The Mosul Fenqitho does not retain this wording, but instead emphasises the one 'hypostatic' union here very clearly.

In Mosul Fenqitho there are various terms for the Incarnation in the *sedre* for the period of *Suboro-Yaldo*. For example, verbs denoting 'Clothing' (*lbeš, etgašam, et'tap* 'Becoming' (*hwo*) *besro hwo, pagro hwo, barnoš hwo* etc.). Verbs denoting 'mingling' and 'mixing' (*balet. ethalat, mizag, etmizag*), reside (*agen, šro, 'mar*) are all discussed here. Different titles which include messianic, divine and human are given in the *sedre*.

Mosul Fenqitho *sedre* are also dealing with other important Syriac christological terms, which explain the meaning and the context of the different Syriac technical terminologies. *Sedre* in the Mosul Fenqitho are typically of West Syrian tradition. Some terminologies which are favored by the East Syrian tradition are rarely found in the Mosul Fenqitho. *Lbeš* imagery is a very important imagery for the Church of the East, but it is found only twice in the Mosul Fenqitho *sedre* for the Sundays of *Suboro-Yaldo* period. The reason maybe because of the suspicion of the West Syrian Fathers over the use of this word in connection with the incarnation, especially

concerning the position of the Nestorius (casting a body on to the Word). Another term *nsab* is not found even a single time, maybe because it had become a characteristic term in the East Syrian tradition.

Terms which are favorite for the West Syrians are also found in the East Syrian prayers and theology. For example *etbasar, etgašam, etbarnaš* etc. The difference between East and West Syrian Fathers on some Christological themes are also focused. For example the subject of *hwo* (Jn 1:14), East Syrian Fathers give much emphasis to the 'flesh' whereas West Syrian Fathers argues that it is the 'Word' which is the subject of the verb *hwo*; 'He dwelt among us'-this 'us' for East Syrian Fathers is 'one of us', or referring to Christ's human body whereas several West Syrian Fathers refer to the Virgin. Reference to the 'temple' of Christ's body, Jn 2:21, frequent in the East Syrian position, was regarded with suspicion by West Syrian writers.

Similarities and differences in the understandings of *eth, ayad, kyono, qnumo* in the two traditions are also found in these *sedre*. Great emphasis on the dynamic character of the incarnation *s#bo*, which is found frequently in the *sedre*, is also noted.

The *sedre* also outline the basic teachings of 'Incarnation'; these include 'eternal birth and historical birth' of Christ, 'Historical Jesus: Perfect God and Man', 'Titles affirming divinity and humanity', 'the humanity treated within the divinity' etc.

The basic teachings in the *sedre* prayers, have an important role in the ecumenical context. Christological teachings like eternal birth and historical birth, historical Jesus as perfect God



and man, the humanity treated in the Divinity, the titles and images affirming the divinity and humanity of Christ, point to the same ideas that are found in different later ecumenical declarations.

One of the main conclusions of the study of Fenqitho is to point out that the teachings of Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians do not exhibit much difference in their Christological stands. This finding agrees with modern findings of modern ecumenical dialogues involving Syrian Orthodox and Catholic Churches.

The first Non-Official meeting of theologians of the Oriental Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Church was held in Vienna

in 1971, and already at the end of this initial meeting it proved possible to issue an agreed statement on Christology. Since this "Vienna Christological formula" (as the statement came to be called) has proved very helpful and influential for subsequent Official Dialogue, it is worth quoting at some length:

"We, as Christians, feel united in a spirit of brotherhood in our faith in the one Lord Jesus Christ, God and Saviour, and recognize equally the commission and prayer of our Lord, that we all may be one in Him, in order that we may bear common witness to Him that the world may believe (John 17:21)."



# St. Thomas Christian Baptismal Adaptations

Prof. John Moolan

St. Thomas Christians in Malabar had adapted many Hindu customs in connection with baptism before the Diamper Synod (1599).<sup>1</sup> Even though the adapted practices were Hindu in culture, the accompanied prayers and ceremonies were Christian in religion and oriental in worship.<sup>2</sup> The Latinization tendency of the Diamper Synod damaged many of the indigenous elements in their liturgy.

## I. Elements of Adaptation

In Hindu tradition the important moments of life are sanctified through certain religious rites called *Samskārās*.<sup>3</sup> The word *Samskāra* is formed from the combination of two Sanskrit roots such as *Sam* (with or together with) and *Kri* (to do or create). They form the verb *Samskri*, which means consecrate, sanctify, form or ritualise. Therefore the noun

*Samskāra* means reutilization, consecration, sanctification or formation. When we read *Sam + kri* in the other way round, then we get the Greek term *Krisam*, which means holy oil used for consecration or sanctification. Therefore the *Samskārās* in Hindu tradition make the whole person holy both in his body and soul in different stages of life from birth to death. Hence they are more or less similar to the sacraments in the Church, which sanctify the life from birth to death.

The *Samskārās* that are related to childhood are eight in number: 1. *Jatakarma* (birth ceremony), 2. *Nāmakarna* (naming ceremony), 3. *Niskramana* (outgoing ceremony), 4. *Annaprāsna* (feeding ceremony), 5. *Chudakarna* (hair cutting ceremony), 6. *Karnaveda* (ear hole making ceremony), 7. *Vidyārambha* (alphabet initiation ceremony), 8. *Upanayana* (religious

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- 1 This synod effected many changes in Malabar liturgy. The Latinization of the East Syrian liturgical traditions in Malabar was one of its main targets. See J.F. Raulin, *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Diamperitina Synodo*, Romae 1745; J. Thaliath, *The Synod of Diamper*, OCA 152, Rome 1958; J. Wicki, "Die Synode von Diamper in Malabar (1599) und ihre Beurteilung (1600-1975)", *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 9 (1977) 205.
  - 2 Placid Podipara, "Hindu in culture, Christian in Religion, Oriental in Worship", *Ostkirchliche Studien* 8 (1959) 89-104; "The Social and Socio-Ecclesiastical Customs of the Syrian Christians of India", *The Eastern Church Quarterly* 7 (1947-1948) 222-51.
  - 3 They are the sanctification ceremonies or the rituals for religious initiation. The number of the *Samskaras* are differently counted: *Gaudhama Dharma Sāstra* (vii, 14-24) counts them as 40, *Vaikanasa Smārtasūtra* (i, 1) numbers 18 of them, while *Harita Dharmasāstra* (xi, 1-5) speaks about two groups of them, such as *Daiva* and *Brahmana*. See J.K. Speijer (ed.), *Specimen literarium inaugurale de ceremonia apud Indos, quae vocatur "Jatakarma"* (Hazenbergh 1872) 25-26; R.B. Pandey, *Hindu Samsakārās*, Delhi 1969.
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initiation ceremony).<sup>4</sup> Among these *Samskāras* that which is closest to Christian baptism is *Upanayana*. Both *Upanayana* and baptism deal with rebirth but in different ways. In baptism the whole person is regenerated into a sinless situation, whereas in *Upanayana* the person is only introduced into the process of rebirth, i.e. the study of *Vēdās*.<sup>5</sup> *Vedic* studies help the person to move beyond the world of darkness (ignorance) and enter into the world of light (the knowledge of truth). This enlightenment from ignorance to the divine knowledge of truth is the real birth in Hinduism.

Baptism makes the person a member of the whole Church, whereas the *Upanayana* makes the person only a member of one of the four castes or inherited socio-religious ranks in Hindu religion: *Brahmin* (priest), *Kshatriya* (warrior), *Vaisya* (farmer or merchant) and *Sudra* (server). One changes the cast only through re-incarnation. Those without castes are the untouchables. Whereas baptism gives the same status to all as the children of God, *Upanayana* restricts the status according to the higher or lower castes of their parents, and only the male children are qualified for it. But for the castless (untouchables) there is no chance for membership in Hinduism.

## II. *Samskāras* adapted to Baptism

Four *Samskaras* adapted to the Christian

initiation rites among the Thomas Christians in Malabar before the Diamper Synod (1599) were, *Jātakarma* (birth rite), *Nāmakarna* (naming rite), *Niskramana* (outgoing rite), and *Upanayana* (initiation rite).

### 1. *Jatakarma* (birth rite)

This is a ceremony of exorcism that takes place either in the delivery room at the first meeting of mother and child or outside the room when the child is brought out for the ceremony.<sup>6</sup> The Hindus believe in the possibility of evil influence upon the new-born child. Therefore proper spiritual care should be given immediately after the birth. Either the father or the *Mandravadi* (sorcerer) recites *Mandras* (prayers) over the child and sprinkles coconut water on his/her head, and gives him/her a secret name. This is the *Nakshatranama* (star name) of the child's birthday. The parents keep this name as a sacred secret. As a sign of prosperity a finger ring is worn, and honey mixed with butter is given to the child. This ceremony shows the earnestness in keeping the child under God's blissful protection.

A similar custom or birth rite ceremony was in practice among the Thomas Christians also. Child's father or the eldest family member was the celebrant on this occasion. Placing the right hand on the child's head he welcomes the child saying, "Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you", and sprinkles holy water on the

4 f.Chirayath, *Taufliturgie des Syro-Malabarischen Ritus*, Das Östliche Christentum 32 (Würzburg 1981) 107-33, describes the close relation between Hindu *Samskāras* and baptism.

5 *Vēdās* are the collections of eternal truths in sacred hymns. There are four *Vēdās*: *Rig Vēda* (sacrificial hymns), *Yajur Vēda* (ritual hymns), *Sāma Vēda* (melodious hymns), *Adarva Vēda* (prayer hymns). See r.c.Majumdar (ed.), *The History and Culture of the Indian People in the Vedic Age I* (Bombay 1965) 228-44.

6 *Manu Smṛiti* II, 29-30; see g.bühler (translation), *The Laws of Manu*, Sacred Books of the East 25 (Oxford 1886) 34-35.

child.<sup>7</sup> This greeting in the name of Jesus Christ keeps the child under divine protection; and the holy water safeguards him/her from evil spirit. Then the child is given butter and honey to indicate a prosperous life in future.

## 2. *Namakarna* (naming rite)

Official naming ceremony takes place on the tenth, twelfth, or any convenient day after the child's birth. But never on thirteenth day, because it is considered as an unlucky day among Hindus.<sup>8</sup> This ceremony has both a solemn and a simple form.

### Solemn form

The solemn ceremony is usually used only at the birth of the first child.<sup>9</sup> The child's father or father's representative performs the ceremony. The performer prepares a ceremonial fire on the cow-dung-coated floor in a room at home. Facing the east he sits down on a northward-pointed *Darbha* (grass, *kRukpu | lu\*) with the fire in front of him. The mother and the child should take bath and wear clean clothes before the ceremony. The mother, carrying the child, stands in the northern side of the fire. Turning the child's face to the north, the mother hands it over to the performer, who sits at the western side of the fire. Passing behind the performer, the

mother comes to the southern side of the fire and sits there on northward pointed *Darbha* (grass, *kRukpu | lu\*). The performer makes sacrifices to the *Prajapati* (creator and protector)<sup>10</sup> and to the deity of the child's birthday *Nakshatra* (star). Then touching the sense organs of the child, he murmurs certain *Mandras* (prayers) to the deities. At the end of the prayers he tells the child's name first to the mother, and then to others.

The Christian adaptation of this naming rite among the Thomas Christians took place on the baptismal day. Parents, godparents, relatives and neighbours gather together in the prayer room at the child's home. The mother takes the child, and the father announces the purpose of the gathering. He begins the ceremony in the name of the Holy Trinity by making the sign of the Cross upon himself and lights a *Nilavilaku* (oil lamp with one or three wicks) as a symbol of divine presence among them. Then he reads out from Ex 3: 1-6 (Moses at the burning bush), and gives a short instruction based on the meaning of names found in Scripture.<sup>11</sup> The naming ceremony takes place at the end of the instruction. Turning to the child, the father says, "you shall be called N,"<sup>12</sup> and then he and the mother place their right hands on the child's

7 l.w.brown, *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas* (Cambridge 1936) 28.

8 v.k.edamana, *Sri Kriyaratnamala and Krishnayajurvediyea Bhaudayana Chadangu* (Malayalam; Kunnamkulam 1148 (1973) 32.

9 *Gobhila Grihya Sutra* II, 7,15-16; 8,1-17; see h.oldenberg (translator), *The Grihya Sutras* II, Sacred Books of the East 30 (Delhi 1946) 55-58; a.weber, *Die vedischen Nachrichten von den Naxatra (Mondstationen)* II (Berloin 1862) 316; pandey, *Hindu Samskara* (Calcutta 1955) 73.

10 k.w.morgan (ed.), *The Basic Beliefs of Hinduism* (Calcutta 1955) 73.

11 Gen 49:1 (Jacob's predictions upon his twelve sons); Lk:57-60 (naming ceremony of John the Baptist); Jn 10:3 (calling of sheep by name); Lk 10:20 (names written in heaven). See Zacharia Scaria, *Randu Prachina Gadya Kritikal* (Malayalam; Changanassery 1976) 33ff.

12 Names are decided upon according to the parental hereditary line. The first child will be given the name of grandparents in father's line, the second one in mother's line and the other children in close relatives' or



head, and all present say, "thanks be to God". All lay their hands on the child's head as a sign of blessing and Joy. The parents thank them all, and distribute broken coconut pieces and sugar among them. The father makes a short thanksgiving based on Scripture for God's wonderful ways of creating the world.<sup>13</sup> The name given at home will be the name given in baptism in the Church. The celebrant's enquiry of the child's name at the beginning of baptism symbolises the ancient custom of deciding the child's name in advance at home.

### Simple form

The simple ceremony takes place on a convenient day. All relatives and neighbours gather together around a carpet or a clean mat at the child's home. Men and women discuss a suitable name for the child. Once the name is decided, the child is brought for the first time out of the *Sudigrha* (maternity room), and laid down on the prepared carpet or mat.

This simple way of naming among St. Thomas Christians in Malabar was done by the parish priest. The priest comes to the child's home, blesses some food, and feeds the child with it. Naming is done on this occasion, and then the child is taken out to the Church for baptism.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. *Niskramana* (outing rite)

This is the ceremony of taking the child

out of home for the first time after the birth in order to expose him/her to the sun and wind. The ceremonial prayers and offerings found here are expected to protect the child from evil influences. The ceremony takes place any time in between the twelfth day and fourth month after birth.<sup>15</sup> A well-decorated place from where one can easily look at the sun is prepared in the open air. The mother or her representative brings the child to this place. The father or his representative turns the child's face skyward to look at the sun. Then the child is taken back to the family prayer-room where intercessions for protection are made to deities. After making offerings to deities, the child is taken to the temple, where the *Brahmins* (priests) bless the child with *Mandras* (prayers). After making obeisance and offerings in the temple, the child is taken back home.

Thomas Christians performed the child's first outing rite (*Niskramana*) immediately after the naming ceremony (*Namakarna*). The father holding an oil lamp in his left hand and carrying the child in his right hand goes out of the house to the open air. All the guests follow him and stay around him. Then he praises the magnificence of creation saying, "How wonderful are your works O Lord; you have created them for humanity. Let this child look at them in order to know, love and praise you."<sup>16</sup> At this moment the child is

saints' names. Usually biblical names are given to the children. Pet names also are common among in use, e.g. George = *Geevarghees*, *Urumees*, and *Kuriyakos*; Jacob = *Chacko*, *Chackochan*, *Chakappan*, *Chakkunni*, and *Kakku*; Thomas = *Thomachan*, *Thomakutty*, *Thomman*, and *Tomy*; John = *Johnny* and *Tony*.

13 Gen 1:31; Pss 33:8-9, 74:16-17, 83:12, 102:25, 119:90, 146:6; Sir 39:25; Heb 11:3; and Rev 4:11.

14 This tradition is given by Pendeados. See Silva Rego Antonio da, *Documentação para História das Missões do Padroado Português de Oriente* (Lisbon 1947) 544ff; a.m.mundadan, *Sixteenth Century Traditions of St. Thomas Christians* (Bangalore 1970) 171.

15 *Paraskara Grihya Sutra* I, 17, 5-6; see a.f.stenzler (translator), *Indische Hausregeln* (Leipzig 1865) II:34.

16 This expression of joy in the glorious creation of the world is based on Gen 1:31; Eccl 39:29; Pss 32:69; 73:16; 82:12; 101:26; 118:90; 145:6; Heb 11:3; Rev 4:11.

permitted to look at the heavens, and all those present respond, "Thanks be to God". The child's mother thanks them all, and sweets are distributed. Afterwards the child is taken to Church for baptism.

#### 4. *Upanayana* (initiation rite)

At the age of eight *Upanayana* takes place for boys alone among Hindus.<sup>17</sup> An *Acharya* (teacher) by performing special ceremonies introduces the boys of upper castes (*Brahmins*) into the Vedic studies. Therefore the *Upanayana* is known as the initiation ceremony into the Hindu religion. By knowing *Vedas* one is regenerated into the knowledge of God. This enlightenment in religious truths effects a new birth.

Many of the elements in *Upanayana* have been adapted into baptism. The only difference is that the *Upanayana* takes place at the age of eight, whereas baptism takes place immediately after *Namakarna* (naming rite) and *Niskramana* (out rite).

### III. Elements of *Upanayana* in Baptism

#### 1. Preparation Rites

##### (a) *Place of Celebration*

*Upanayana* takes place at the *Acharya's* home. The designated place is coated with cow dung, and rice or paddy and *Darbha* (grass, kRukpu|lu\ ) are spread over the

ceremonial ground.<sup>18</sup> Baptism takes place in a well-decorated Church, the house of God, where the things for baptism are prepared in advance.

##### (b) *Fire*

Fire as the symbol of God is prepared at the centre of the ceremonial ground. The *Acharya*, asking God's blessing, sprinkles water around the fire, and places some firewood on it.<sup>19</sup> In baptism the deacon used to carry a portable oil lamp (*Bhadradeepam*) throughout the celebration, as a symbol of God's presence. At the beginning of the ceremony the celebrant lights the lamp by invoking God's presence and protection upon all present.

##### (c) *The child*

Before the *Upanayana* ceremony the boy's head is shaved and he is dressed in a special robe; a long loose outer garment.<sup>20</sup> Before baptism the child is dressed well, and obviously no head shaving is needed. Since baptism takes place immediately after *Namakarna* (naming ceremony) and *Niskramana* (out going ceremony), the child is already dressed well.

#### 2. Ceremonial Rites

##### (a) *Encountering and adoption*

The boy with his father encounters the *Acharya* at his home for the *Upanayana* ceremony. Then the boy expresses his wish to the *Acharya* to learn *Vedas*. The *Acharya* as

17 *Hiranyakesin Grihya Sutra* I, 5, 2; see h.oldenberg (translator), *The Grihyas Sutras* I, Sacred Books of the East 29 (Delhi 1964) 58; a.Hllebrand, *Ritual-Literatur, vedische Opfer und Zauber* (Strassbourg 1897) 50; p.v.kane, *History of Dharma Sastra* II (Poona 1974) 268; v.m.apte, *Social and Religious Life in Grihya Sutras* (Bombay 1957) 198, 268.

18 edamana, op.cit., 51f.

19 *Gobhila Grihya Sutra* 11, 10, 15-17; see oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II: 64-65; h.stöner, *Das Mandrabrahmana* (Halle 1901) 36f.

20 Ibid.



God's representative touches the boy's chest (heart), and clothes him with *Brahmachariya* (celibate's) garment with certain prayers.<sup>21</sup> Thus the *Acharya* adopts the boy as his student to be taught *Vedas*.

In baptism the encountering takes place at the Church door. The godparents bring the child to the celebrant at the church door. Then the celebrant greets them saying, "Praise be to Jesus Christ". The godparents respond, "Forever and ever". Here the celebrant makes the enquiry, "What do you want from the Church?" The godparents respond, "We request you for N. the membership in the Church through baptism, the rebirth in the Holy Spirit". The celebrant welcomes the child saying, "may God bless you", and lights the oil lamp to begin the ceremony.<sup>22</sup> At the end of the *Enarxis* (introductory rites) adoption takes place. The celebrant, holding the child's right hand, invites him/her by saying, "Enter the house of God to attain membership in the Church."

#### (b) Purification (*Anjalipurna*)

This ceremony is intended to qualify the student to be introduced to "*Gayatri Mantra*" (Sacred Morning Prayer)<sup>23</sup> in the course of his studies. This ceremony can be done in two ways:<sup>24</sup> either the *Acharya*, murmuring *Mandras*, takes water in both his hands, and pours it into the cupped hands of the student, or the student takes water and *Dahrba* (grass,

kRukpu|lu\)) in both hands and extends them towards the *Acharya*. The *Acharya*, keeping his right hand on top, takes hold of student's hands and murmurs certain prayers. At the end of the prayer the student throws away the grass and washes his hands. The baptismal triple immersion in water, symbolising death to sin (purification) and life in Christ is done in the name of the Holy Trinity.

#### (c) Vesting

In this ceremony *Acharya* gives a special garment as uniform to the *Vedic* student. He wears it throughout the period of learning.<sup>25</sup> This symbolises *Acharya's* best wishes for a long life in his student career. In baptism the celebrant gives a white dress to the child, symbolising an everlasting divine call for pure and holy life. Baptismal purity is to be maintained as a criterion for eternal life.<sup>26</sup>

#### (d). Holy thread wearing (*Poonunool*)

Wearing holy thread (*Poonunool*) is another important ceremony in *Upanayana*.<sup>27</sup> The holy thread is made up of three long cotton cords of which the both ends are bound together in one knot to form a round shape. With the help of the *Acharya* the student wears it over his left shoulder, allowing it to dangle on his right side. He wears it for his whole life as a sign of protection by *Trimurti* (the three divine persons) - *Brahma* (creator), *Vishnu* (protector) and *Siva* (destroyer). Three threads in one knot

21 Hyranyakesin *Grihya Sutra* I, 2, 5, 8-10; see oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II: 151-52; a.s.altekar, *Education in Ancient India* (Varanasi 1965) 300; stenzler, *Indische Hausregeln* I: 2.

22 Mdey & G. Vavanikunnel, *Taufe, Firmung, Bube in den Kirchen des Ostsyrischen Ritenkreises* (Köln 1971) 89-90; *Kudāsakal* (Malayalam; Eranakulam 1969) 9.

23 Through this prayer God's help and guidance is sought to begin the day well and continue the good works during the whole day. See Narayana Nambudiripadu, *Rig-Veda Bhasha Bahashyam* (Malayalam; Kottayam 1995) 41.

24 *Gobhila Grihya Sutra* II, 10, 18; see oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II: 65; edamana, op.cit., 52.

25 *Abastamba Dharma Sutra* II, 2, 4, 21-22; see g.bühler (translator), *The Sacred Laws of the Aryas* I, Sacred Books of the East 2 (Oxford 1879) 110.

26 Mdey & Vavanikunnel, op.cit., 94; *Syro-Malabar Sabhyude Kudāsakal*, (Malayalam; Kakkanad 2005) 42.

27 *Gobhila Grihya Sutra* I, 2, 1-3; see oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II: 16-17; pande, *Hindu Samskaras*, 226; J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (Oxford 1906) 160-61; kane, *History of Dharma Sutra* II: 287ff.

represent also man's dedication of his three faculties (life, speech and thought) to God, because they are the controlling powers of the whole human activity.

In baptism the celebrant helps the child to wear around his/her neck a white cotton thread or a gold chain with a cross or a medal of saint attached to it. This symbolises the protection by the cross and the help of saints. Sometimes three threads in one knot are used to indicate the protection of the Holy Trinity.<sup>28</sup>

(e). *Waistband (Mekhala)*

In *Upanayana* the *Acharya* binds thrice a cotton thread around the loins of the student.<sup>29</sup> This is to protect the student from evil eye, and to help him to grow in beauty, fame and devotion. A similar ceremony was existent in baptism also. The celebrant binds a black cotton thread thrice around the loins of the child. Black colour indicates death to sin, and it's wearing around the waist indicates the girding of the loins with the truth (Eph 6:14).

(f). *Handing over (Paridana)*

In this ceremony the student is handed over to the *Acharya*.<sup>30</sup> The father hands over the student to the *Acharya*, and the *Acharya* in prayer embraces the student as a sign of acceptance to teach him *Vedas*.

This ceremony had been beautifully adapted in the concluding part of the baptismal rite. The celebrant places his right hand on child's right shoulder, and pleads for

saints' help and protection saying, "I entrust you to the guard and protection of saints."<sup>31</sup> When the celebrant takes back his hands, then the godparents place their right hands on the child's right shoulder.<sup>32</sup> This is a sign of their acceptance of the child from God. Thus they accept their obligation to bring up the child in Christian faith as God's child.

(g). *Setting foot on stone (Asmarohana)*

The *Acharya* requests the student to climb on a fixed stone set at the northern side of the fire (*Homa*) saying, "Set foot on this stone, and be firm like a rock to conquer battles and destroy enemies."<sup>33</sup> This ceremony urges the student to undertake a serious study of *Vedas*, and to continue his career as a student with much care, so that he may become solid in truth and stable in determination for overcoming life struggles.

Adaptation of this custom in baptism is found at the end of the ceremony. All go from baptistery to the sanctuary entrance. The godparents lay the child on the altar step. Then the celebrant prays, "Christ is your corner stone, the foundation of your life. Let all your deeds be founded on and directed by Him. Be determined and solid like a rock to manifest Jesus in all perils of devil until eternity."<sup>34</sup> At the end of the prayer the godparents take the child back from the altar step. Then the celebrant says to the child, "In God's name go to the world." The ceremony comes to an end with a final blessing of all present for the celebration.

28 Podipara, "The Social and Socio-Ecclesiastical Customs of the Syrian Christians of India," 223.

29 *Hiranyakesin Grihya Sutra* I, 1, 4, 4f., in oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II:147f; *Asvalayana Grihya Sutra* I, 19, 12 and 20, 9, in stenzler, *Indische Hausregeln* I:47.

30 *Sankhayana Grihya Sutra* II, 3, 1; see h. oldenberg (translator), *Sankhayanaagrilhyam*, Indische Studien 15 (Heilsheim/ New York 1973) 5; Edamana, op.cit., 53.

31 Madey & Vavanikunnel, op.cit., 96; *Syro-Malabar Sabhyude Kudasaka*, 50.

32 Edamana, op.cit., 53

33 *Hiranyakesin Grihya Sutra* I, 1, 3, 14 -1, 4, 1; see oldenberg, *The Grihya Sutras* II:146; altekar, *Education in Ancient India*, 300.

34 madey & vavanikunnel, op.cit., 96.



## **BOOK REVIEW**

**Benedict Vadakkekara ,*Origin of Christianity in India. A Historiographical Critique*, Media House, Delhi 2007,p.372, price 395/.**

This work that is the thoroughly revised and updated edition of the previous work *Origin of India's St.Thomas Christians: A Historiographical Critique* (1995) is, as the author himself claims, the integration of the history of an ancient Indian community into its national and global context.

Because of the lack of clear historical evidence to support the strong tradition that St.Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ, founded the Church in India, a large historiography has emerged. Rev.Fr. Benedict analyzes this vast literature in three chapters and highlights the intellectual and religious significance of this tradition. The first chapter deals with the early Christianity in India and its present division. The second chapter examines the arguments and supportive evidences which claim or deny the origin of the Church from St.Thomas .The third chapter makes an evaluation of the sources and examines the structure of the early Christianity , its relation with the East Syrian Church and with other Churches ,their social status and their relation with other people in the society .The book is blessed with an excellent foreword and enriched by a detailed bibliography and index .

I hope that this scholarly work will help to get to know the rich patrimony and spiritual heritage of the ancient Christianity of St.Thomas.

**Rev.Dr.Thomas Mannooramparampil**

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# **NEWS**

## **Archbishop Sandri Appointed Prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches**

Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Archbishop Leonardo Sandri as prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches. 63 year old Archbishop Leonardo Sandri has been undersecretary of state for general affairs. He was ordained a priest in 1967. He entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See in 1974 and served in Madagascar, and from 1977 to 1989 with the Vatican secretariat of state. He was an adviser in the office of the papal nuncio to the United States and the Organization of American States from 1989 to 1991. On Aug. 22, 1991, he was named prefect of the Pontifical Household. He was made the assessor for general affairs for the secretariat of state in 1992. He was named papal nuncio to Venezuela on July 22, 1997, and ordained archbishop that same year. On March 1, 2000, he was made papal nuncio to Mexico and on Sept. 16, 2000, he was named undersecretary of state for general affairs.

## **Pope Clears Canonization of Blessed Alphonsa**

Pope Benedict XVI approved the decrees that allow for the canonization of Poor Clare Sister Alphonsa of the Immaculate Conception (1910-1946) of India. On Dec. 2, 1953 the diocesan process for her was inaugurated and she was declared a Servant of God. On July 9, 1985, she received the title Venerable Sister Alphonsa. On Feb. 8, 1986, during his historic pastoral visit to India, Pope John Paul II beatified her along with Kuriakose Elias Chvara at Kottayam, Kerala.

## **Bishop Koorilos Appointed Archbishop of Tiruvalla**

Major Archbishop His Beatitude Baselios Mor Cleemis of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church has promoted Bishop Thomas Koorilos Chakkalapadickal of Muvattapuzha to the office of metropolitan Archbishop of Tiruvalla. The archbishop-elect was born in Kadapramannar, Kerala on 19 October 1958, as the 7th child of Niranam Panackamattam Chackalapadickal Ninan Varghese and Eliamma. He had his seminary formation at Thiruvalla Minor Seminary and Papal Seminary, Pune. He was ordained a

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priest in 1985 and consecrated bishop in 1997 as the auxiliary of Thiruvalla. From 15 January 2003 he has been doing his Episcopal ministry as the first Bishop of the newly formed diocese of Muvattupuzha.

### **Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Paurastya Vidyapitham**

Paurastya Vidapitham, established as an autonomous Faculty of Theology on July 3, 1982, is completing 25 years of service to the Church and society. The concluding celebration of the Silver Jubilee was on June 16, 2007. Mr. Vayalar Ravi, Honourable Cabinet Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar Church, Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Vice-Chancellor of the Vidyapitham, (High Court) Justice Sri Antony Dominic, Dr. Jancy James, Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi University, Rev. Fr. Pauly Kannokadan, former student of the Vidyapitham, and other guests participated in the meeting.

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